



**ANALYSING THE LOYALTY LEVELS DISPLAYED BY FOOTBALL FANS: A  
CASE STUDY ON CAPE TOWN CITY FOOTBALL CLUB**

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## **ABSTRACT**

According to conventional wisdom, football fans exhibit perpetual loyalty to the clubs that they choose to support. These prevailing beliefs are largely the product of the fanaticism and intense partisanship that fans display. However, in South Africa, the reality is that the majority of the football teams are either failing to harness this loyalty, or that the loyalty levels that their fans display, contradict conventional wisdom. Due to the important role that these fans play in revenue generation, there is a need for leadership at these clubs to better understand this lucrative market.

The objective of this study was to establish whether the loyalty levels displayed by fans in South Africa correspond with, or contradict, conventional wisdom.

The limited understanding of the matter within a South African context means that clubs lack the required understanding of their respective fan bases. This creates a situation, which stifles the efficacy of management to implement positive changes. This study was anchored in the model of Stewart and Smith (2007) of sport fans' motivations.

There are three core dimensions distinguished by the model. These relate to psychological, socio-cultural and social motives, all of which facilitate the process of an individual becoming a fan; and then subsequently remaining loyal.

A qualitative research approach was used to collect the data for this study. An interview guide was used to collect the information from the fans and the top management of Cape Town City Football Club through face-to-face interviews. Each interview was recorded with the aid of a voice recorder and all the data collected were then transcribed.

The findings from the study show that fans demonstrate more support to Cape Town City Football Club when the team is winning, as opposed to when it is going through a rough patch. Conclusively, the lack of understanding of fans in football clubs means that it is difficult to communicate in an all-inclusive way, considering that not all fans are the same. Based on the findings, the study suggests that leadership at South African football clubs should allow for open dialogues to be created, in which the issues

can be discussed; so that practices implemented would better serve the target population.

Keywords: *Consumer loyalty, football fan loyalty, team brands, sports marketing, Cape Town City Football Club, South Africa*

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## **List of Acronyms**

CAF: Confederation of African Football

COSATU: Congress of South African Trade Unions

FASA: White Only Football Association of South Africa

FIFA: Federation Internationale de Football Association

MSC: Motivations of Sport Consumer

MSSC: Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption

NSL: National Soccer League

PSL: Premier Soccer League

SAFA: South African Football Association

SFMS: Sport Fan Motivation Scale

SII: Sport Interest Inventory

UEFA: Union of European Football Associations



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

*“You can change your wife, your politics, your religion, but never, never can you change your favourite football team” (Eric Cantona, 2009).*

### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to further research the concept of sports fan loyalty in the context of South African football. It will aim to find out to what extent conventional wisdom applies in this country. To do so, the ABSA Premiership's Cape Town City Football Club will be used as a case study. From this point, onwards, the paper will simply refer to the club as Cape Town City FC. When attempting to analyse the sports fan, Cape Town City FC is perhaps one of the better examples to examine in the ABSA Premiership; since the club was only formed in June 2016. Therefore, being in their first year of existence, any fans that they may have would be likely to have supported another team in previous years. As such, the very crux of the loyalty concept can be tackled (Sport24, 2016).

Fans exhibit perpetual loyalty to the clubs that they choose to support. These prevailing beliefs are by and large the product of the fanaticism and intense partisanship that fans show. They are based on the observed behaviour of fans, and especially the retained loyalty of fans who support inferior sporting teams (Johnston, 2004). In marketing practice, it has been a long-standing goal to understand why these fans behave the way they do (Stewart, Smith & Nicholson, 2003).

The growing commercialisation in football and the sports industry in general has resulted in the added emphasis of a stable fan base; as a means of generating a competitive advantage (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler, 2008). Therefore, as they have a significant role to play when it comes to the club's profile and profitability, understanding the behaviour of fans regarding loyalty is now as vital as ever (Johnston, 2004).

A substantial amount of research has gone into this relationship between fans and their favourite clubs (Parker & Stuart, 1997; Tapp, 2004). The general acknowledgement, based on a vast majority of studies, is that fans display the kind of long-term loyalty that has now faded in most other industries (Johnston, 2004). At the

same time, however, there has been some evidence to suggest the patterns of sports fandom to be more complex than this (Tapp, 2004). These suggest that loyalty amongst fans cannot be taken as a forgone conclusion and be blindly relied on. Perhaps more importantly, in a South African football context, the concept of fan loyalty has been under-examined in terms of empirical studies on the matter.

To the knowledge of this researcher, the studies that have been conducted in South Africa have mainly focused on motivations behind the attendance at ABSA Premiership matches; since attendance figures in the country have proved worrisome (Isabirye and Surujlal, 2003; Jere and Mathidza, 2014). The problem with this is that examining motivations behind attendances merely skims over the concept of loyalty; when this very concept might be the core issue. For example, what motivates an individual to attend a match may be as simple as the desire to be entertained or socialise on a given day.

However, that desire may not be present every time there is a match. If so, motivations alone cannot be analysed and acted upon, in order to remedy the problem at hand. Contrawise, if the loyalty itself is brought into question, then increasing attendance might be easier to tackle. This is because one can distinguish between those loyal fans who support the team – no matter what – and those who do not. Thereby, ways can be pinpointed to convert those who are not very loyal into individuals who are. Accordingly, taking the aforementioned into consideration, current and past researchers may have been focusing on the symptoms of the problem, rather than dealing with the root.

The chapter will begin by describing the history of Cape Town City FC. Subsequently, it will provide a theoretical background to the concept of loyalty in football. It will establish how teams have become brands in themselves; how fans adopt this brand; and what drives loyalty or allows for the lack thereof; once this adoption process ends. Having covered the conceptual framework, the chapter will move on to the research question and objectives at hand, as well as the method chosen to carry out this investigation.

Finally, it will explain how this study aims to contribute to the wider pool of sports-marketing literature.

## **1.2. Background to the Study**

This section incorporates an initial understanding of the major variables of this study. Broadly speaking, these are: (i) teams as brands; (ii) brand adoption by fans; (iii) fan loyalty, once they have adopted the brand.

Before moving onto these key tenants, the section below briefly outlines the history of Cape Town City FC; and it explains why it is the chosen example for this study.

### **1.2.1 Cape Town City Football Club**

Cape Town City FC is one of the two Cape Town teams currently playing at the highest level of South African domestic football – the ABSA Premiership. The club was formed in 2016, following the purchase of the ABSA Premiership's Mpumalanga Black Aces franchise – and the subsequent relocation of the team to Cape Town. Within the club's first year of existence, they secured their first trophy. The Telkom Knockout Challenge represents the silverware that is already in the club's trophy cabinet.

In addition, the club finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in ABSA Premiership. The fact that the club is in its first year of existence perhaps makes them the ideal team to study in the league. This is because the formation of a fan base suggests that fan loyalty may not be set in stone. At this point, last year, the club did not exist. Therefore, the fans who are supporting them now, are likely to have been supporting a different team not too long ago.

### **1.2.2 Clubs as Brands**

In contemporary times, the landscape of professional sports has dramatically changed. In 2003, no professional team was worth US1 billion; yet 5 years later, there were 24 of them around the world (Van Riper, 2009). Shifts in thinking in recent decades has meant that brands have been studied in a much wider range of organisation types and sectors; as the importance of branding has been increasingly acknowledged (Bridgewater, 2010).

One of the most recent and rapid developments in this regard is represented through the branding of sports teams (Arigil & Pennazio, 2012). As suggested by the aforementioned figures, teams are businesses; and the most important asset of a

sports team as a business is its brand (Bauer, Sauer & Schmitt, 2005). It is important because a team's purpose, direction and meaning are derived from its brand identity (Hill & Vincent, 2006). Brand personality is the basis on which this identity is formed; and it is comprised of values and attributes (Aaker, 1997). Increased usage by consumers, together with the encouragement of emotions that tend to increase loyalty and trust, are the result of this brand personality (Aaker, 1997).

Because of the growing commercial importance of sports, it has become incumbent on clubs to focus on raising revenue – if they harbour any hopes of meeting their sporting aims (Bridgewater, 2010). Utilising clubs as brands, in order to acquire a loyal fan base, may be one of the best ways to achieve this.

Some people deplore the impact of business on football; and consequently, the idea of mentioning brands or anything business related in the same breath as football, is likely to make the fans cringe (Bridgewater, 2010). After all, modern-day football, in many respects, is unrecognisable from the game it was 50 years ago – even if it is governed by many of the same rules (Bridgewater, 2010). However, a brand does not only refer to a commercial activity. From a marketing perspective, branding is about gauging what is important to, and aligning organisational values with the people with whom the brand engages.

Therefore, rather than simplistically looking at branding in sports from the viewpoint of revenue generation, to consider clubs as brands, is to at least attempt to understand what they stand for, what is integral to them, and how best they should communicate and behave. This is in order that the services their fans receive, is clear and consistent (Bridgewater, 2010). By viewing clubs as brands, the suggestion is that there are elements that levitate the fan towards the brand. Thus, in the more grandiose scheme of this paper revolving around fan loyalty, branding provides the foundation from which one can start dissecting how and why fans adopt a team.

After understanding how clubs have become businesses, and the importance of this when it comes to loyalty, it makes sense to see how this brand concept applies to Cape Town City FC. By applying it to the real-life example of the paper, the characteristics of a team brand that sports consumers relate to should be better elucidated and understood.

### 1.2.3 Cape Town City Football Club as a Brand

As a brand, a club or team has an identity and image to which the consumer relates. Brand identity carries more meaning when it relates to sport-team brands, as a result of the high degree with which individuals identify themselves with their favourite teams (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2005, cited in Arigil & Pennazio, 2012). Firstly, the concept of brand identity comprises everything that makes a brand unique and meaningful (Janonis, Dovaliené & Virvilaitė, 2007). It entails the unique set of associations that not only indicate a core and extended identity; but also imply a guarantee of quality to the customers (Ghodeswar, 2008).

The brand identity of a sports team reflects what all the team has to offer to both incumbent and potential fans (Urde, 2003). According to the proposed distinction by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), a brand's core identity is defined through elements, such as the logo, the historical heritage, as well as the city/country of origin. An element, such as the players' performance on the field is, on the other hand, part of the extended identity of a brand. The extended identity layers over the core identity, which in turn helps the brand to express what it stands for (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

If applied to Cape Town City FC, this would suggest that a core identity, such as it being located in Cape Town (amongst others), has the ability to attract sports consumers to the team brand. Similarly, the extended identity would suggest that on-field success is a traction point for consumers. Therefore, in an ideal scenario, some sort of team success accompanied by team location may be enough for respective fans from Cape Town to form a bond with the Cape Town City FC football team.

Secondly, brand image allows the consumer to associate symbolic meanings with specific aspects of the product. Corporate brand image can, according to some studies (Cretu & Brodie, 2007), positively affect consumer judgements. It is the belief of many researchers and sports marketers that sports organisations shield themselves from the potentially detrimental financial effects of losses with the help of strong brands (Gladden and Funk, 2001). Superior brands are thought to differentiate the product of one club from another. Some empirical support suggests that brand image has a strong effect on the attitudinal loyalty showed by fans to a club (Gladden and Funk,

2001); while other research has also claimed that economic success and the strength of a brand are positively related (Bauer, Sauer & Schmitt, 2004, cited in Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008).

Recognition, confidence and other associations can all be influenced by the image a company displays. This makes purchases easier for consumers (Martenson, 2009). Consequently, “the company” becomes the primary brand, as opposed to the product itself (Berry, 2000). Good corporate reputation, as asserted by various authors (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001), can help create and sustain a loyal consumer base and influence repeat purchases. Therefore, if applied to Cape Town City FC, this would suggest that loyalty to the club could be formed because of the good image that the club perhaps holds. Conversely, if the image is not so good, this may be a factor contributing to the lack of loyalty from some fans.

After introducing the concept of clubs as brands and attempting to explore the Cape Town City FC brand as a precursor of loyalty, or the lack of it, the next logical step would be to actually bring the fans themselves into the equation. This following section aims to do precisely that; and it starts off by differentiating between the different types of fans in the industry.

#### 1.2.4 Brand Adoption by Fans

As suggested previously, identity, reputation and image are predominant themes in the world of sport (Blumrodt, 2014). In order to boost their own self-image, many spectators associate themselves with successful teams (Cialdini et al., 1976). Therefore, the adoption of a football brand is influenced by the associations that accompany the brand. These associations can generally be grouped into three broad areas: attributes, benefits and attitudes.

##### 1.2.4.1 Attributes

A brand is described by its attributes. Attributes are features that directly relate to a product (Keller, 1993). The relationship between a brand and its purchase or consumption, along with what a consumer thinks about the brand, is explained by these attributes (Amirshahi & Abasian, 2007, cited in Javani et al., 2012). In the sports industry, various researchers have asserted that tradition, team management, team

players and team success are the features, which draw fans to a particular club (Bauer et al., 2005; Gladden & Funk, 2001). If applied to Cape Town City FC, this could mean that because their tradition links them back to the original Cape Town City FC (a club that existed a few decades ago), supporters relate well.

This is because they may see it as an authentic Cape Town club. This authenticity may look even more appealing, when juxtaposed with the fact that the other club in Cape Town, Ajax Cape Town, has Dutch links, rather than local ones. In addition, some might be drawn towards head Coach Benni McCarthy; while others might be taken by the fact that the club plays many of its matches in the beautiful Cape Town stadium.

#### 1.2.4.2 Benefits

The personal values that a consumer considers as important characteristics of a brand are deemed to be benefits. Relating to sports fans, the benefit factors suggested by many researchers have been (amongst others) fan identification, escape and peer-group acceptance (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008). When it comes to Cape Town City FC, this could mean that fans decide to adopt the club brand because being a fan and attending matches provides them with a much-needed escape from their daily lives. In addition, many of the people that they know could support Cape Town City FC; and so they may feel under pressure to do the same – or be at risk of being ostracised. Finally, supporting the club may provide them with pride and identification; as Cape Town City FC has already proved to be successful, even though it is still in its infancy.

#### 1.2.4.3 Attitudes

Attitudes directly affect a person's responses; and they are psychic and mental tendencies gained through organised experience. They comprise factors, such as the available information, direct experience, as well as the value of the experience in the eyes of the consumer (Gladden & Funk, 2002). When related to the sports industry, it has been mentioned that factors such as knowledge, importance and effective reactions are those which relate to the fans of a particular team (Gladden & Funk, 2001). If applied to Cape Town City FC, this would suggest that there would be a better chance of fans adopting the brand; if they have enough knowledge about it. For example, if they do not have access to TV and the internet; they do not live anywhere

near the stadium; and they have no-one in their inner circle, who supports the club, they will not have enough knowledge to want to adopt the brand.

Moreover, if the team holds a certain level of importance to them; then they would be more likely to adopt the brand. For example, the team could identify the importance of economic freedom to them. If someone comes from a poor background; but they are talented enough, they may adopt the club brand; because they aspire to play for the team one day – as the means of escaping the poverty cycle.

Thus, brand adoption comes in many different forms; but if the goal is to better understand the behaviour of sports consumers, then the knowledge of these differences is paramount in forming a well-rounded picture.

#### 1.2.5 Consumer Loyalty

Oliver (1999) describes customer loyalty as *“a deeply held commitment to re-buy or repatronise a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same brand or same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour”*.

Research into consumer brand loyalty has, over the years, progressed in line with basic social psychological research. In the initial stages, researchers focused more on the behaviours of consumers, that is, behavioural loyalty. Such work focused on the probability, the consistency and the extent to which a consumer would purchase one brand over substitute rival choices (Kahn, Kalwani & Morrison, 1986). However, since then; it has been asserted by some scholars that loyalty to a product or service comprises attitudinal dimensions (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978, cited in Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008).

This approach compensates for the shortcomings associated with only measuring loyalty based on behaviours. For example, consumers may repeatedly purchase a product, due to factors such as price and convenience rather than loyalty. Therefore, in order to describe and measure consumer loyalty, two dominant dimensions can be used: attitude and behaviour.



#### 1.2.5.1 Attitudinal Loyalty

When applied to the sports industry, the psychological commitment of a fan to a team represents the attitudinal dimension of loyalty (Beatty & Kahle 1988). The emotional or psychological attachment towards a brand is generally defined as commitment. Fans' commitment has traditionally been measured in three ways: persistence, resistance and attachment (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Mahony, Madrigal & Howard, 2000; Pritchard, Havitz & Howard, 1999). Therefore, if a fan is deeply attached to a team; and this commitment is consistent and unaffected by any criticism, they are considered to be showing a high level of psychological commitment. In addition to these factors, some studies have included the extent to which individuals care about the future welfare of their team, as a key measure of commitment.

Simply put, the attitudinal dimension refers to fans feelings towards the club; and these then drive their behaviour.

#### 1.2.5.2 Behavioural Loyalty

On the other hand, both past behaviour and behavioural intentions are measures of behavioural loyalty (Fink, Trail & Anderson, 2002). Applied to the sporting context, past behaviour comprises the attendance of live matches, consuming club related-media, purchasing merchandise etc. (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Mahony, Madrigal & Howard, 2000). In addition, the positive and persistent future behaviour of the fan makes up the intentional component of behavioural loyalty. Both positive word-of-mouth and intended loyal behaviour represent this positive and persistent future behaviour. Positive word-of-mouth is all the communication of an informal nature that evaluates and recommends goods or services to other consumers (Anderson, 1998). Behavioural intentions correspond to the past behaviour of the consumer, when relating to viewing games, buying merchandise etc.

For example, they consist of intending to buy club merchandise, intending to watch a club game on the television and intending to visit the stadium for a live match etc.

Therefore, the loyalty of fans towards a club can be displayed in various ways. Having defined the ways in which loyalty is demonstrated, the loyalty, or the lack thereof of

football fans can subsequently be measured by using indicators relating to these behavioural and attitudinal dimensions.

### **1.3 Research Question and Objectives**

This study aims to gain deeper insight into the loyalty levels displayed by football fans, with a specific focus on the fans of Cape Town City FC. In order to make the purpose of this study clear, the research question and objectives now follow.

Question: What is the extent of the loyalty levels displayed by the fans of Cape Town City FC?

Taking the research question and background information into consideration, the following research objectives have been formulated:

- ❖ Determine the extent of the loyalty levels displayed by Cape Town City FC fans.
- ❖ Assess those factors contributing to the loyalty of the fans.
- ❖ Simultaneously examine those factors that may be contributing to disloyalty.

The first research objective will be addressed; once the primary research gets under way. The latter two objectives have briefly been introduced in this chapter; and they will be further explained, as the study progresses. To address the broad research questions and objectives, an instrumental case-study design will be used.

### **1.4 Methodology**

This study has followed an instrumental case-study design, using qualitative methods of collecting the primary data. Instrumental case studies are undertaken from the viewpoint that a deeper understanding of a broader issue is required, or that a challenge to current generalisations is called for (Hyett et al., 2014). An instrumental case study is useful; because in-depth insight is provided; and the theory can be refined (Stake, 1995). The target population consisted of fans of Cape Town City FC in Cape Town, South Africa. Convenience sampling was used; and this entailed the researcher making use of naturally formed groups (Creswell, 2009). This was beneficial; because it allowed for the selection of a sample, from which much could be learned (Merriam, 1998). The sample size of the study consisted of 21 participants,

who were interviewed face-to-face. This sample was split up into three groups, each containing 7 participants. The distinction was based on the three categories of fans that will be detailed in Chapter 3, to show their varying opinions and inner thoughts. Following the conclusion of the interviews, the findings were triangulated in two ways. Firstly, by an interview with the individual at Cape Town City FC, who manages the relationship between the supporters' groups and the club. Secondly, through the use of Tweets by fans on Twitter.

The participants of the study gave their informed consent to the interview. They were assured that all their answers were confidential in nature; and that they would solely be used for academic purposes. In addition, they were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point; if they did not feel comfortable to continue.

## **1.5 Contribution of the Study**

This study offers some theoretical and managerial contributions. These contributions are explained in the section below.

### **1.5.1 Contribution to sports-marketing literature**

A considerable amount of literature has focused on the relationship between a sports fan and his/her team. However, not all of them have the empirical data to back up their study. In the case of those studies that have been tested, the majority of them have been applied to American team sports; while European football has received its fair share of publicity too (Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein & Schmitt, 2010). When it comes to South Africa, and South African football, research has been limited. Indeed, there has been research into the fans of ABSA Premiership teams; but this research has predominantly focused on the factors behind attendance at ABSA Premiership games (Isabirye & Surujlal, 2003; Jere & Mathidza, 2014).

The reason behind this has been logical; as world class stadiums were built prior to the World Cup; and after it, for the majority of ABSA Premiership games, they have been half empty. Hence, the concern of researchers so far has been legitimate; but the focus on this one aspect of fan loyalty in the country has left gaps in the literature.

Therefore, this study will first attempt to contribute to South African sports-marketing literature by starting to fill those gaps. Secondly, it aims to contribute to sports marketing literature in general by adding empirical research from within the South African context. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, there has yet to be a case study of a professional football team, such as this one, researched in the country before. Accordingly, it should be beneficial; as it will be analysing a phenomenon within a new context.

### 1.5.2 Managerial Implications

In addition to the more academic contributions, this paper contains important implications for sports marketers in South Africa as well. By categorising football fans into different types and studying their loyalty patterns in relation to these segments, marketers should be able to tailor their offerings. If fans are understood as a complex rather than a homogenous group; and their varying complexities are revealed and better understood, then it becomes easier to efficiently serve the different types. Perhaps more importantly, some studies have suggested that various fan types may work in sequence. What they suggest is that a fan that belongs to a certain category may not remain in that category for ever (Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw, 1999).

For example, a fan can evolve from being considered as a temporary fan to being a fanatical fan. If that is indeed the case, then it would be important to find out what factors can influence this change. Therefore, as the study aims to uncover a deeper understanding of the South African football fan; if it could start revealing some of these factors, then marketers would be able to pinpoint ways in which they can guide fans along the path to fanaticism. This in turn would lead to a stronger and larger base, from which significant revenue can be generated.

Moreover, marketers may also be guided in preventing the opposite from happening, i.e. fanatical fans losing interest in the team.

Overall, the conventional wisdom of perpetual loyalty shown by fans has been under-tested in the South African football environment. By focusing on the factors relating to attendance, instead of fan loyalty itself, researchers have ended up trying to combat the symptoms of the problem, rather than dealing with the root perhaps. In order to

take two steps forward, sometimes it is necessary to take a step back; and this is what this study is attempting to do.

## **1.6 Demarcation of the Study**

This study will have five remaining chapters that will deal with the theory, the methodology, the findings, and some conclusions/recommendations of this study. The study consists of 6 chapters. This has been the first one; and it has provided an introduction into what the study is all about. Before analysing the various influences on loyalty amongst fans, Chapter 2 provides the context within which they find themselves in in South Africa. The theoretical framework behind fan loyalty will be outlined in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will attend to the methodology, by describing the interpretivist paradigm that was used, the case-study research design that was chosen and the qualitative approach that was carried out, as informed by the chosen paradigm. The findings obtained from conducting the methodology will be presented and interpreted in Chapter 5. Finally, Chapter 6 will explain the conclusions that can be deduced from these findings, along with some recommendations for future avenues of research, as well as any limitations to the current study.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

The study is briefly introduced in this chapter; and a basic understanding of it is provided. An interpretivist philosophy guided the qualitative methodology used for the purposes of the study. Fans that are members of various Cape Town City FC supporters' groups form the target population. Various factors, inclusive of brand image, were proposed to influence the loyalty of fans. This assertion was supported in the data-analysis process to a certain extent. The semi-structured interviews that were conducted provided valuable information about the other factors that also influence the fans.

## **CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUAL SETTING IN SOUTH AFRICAN FOOTBALL**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is the context, around which this study revolves. The important issues that will be discussed are as follows: firstly, mention will be made of the unique features in the management of sport that necessitate the use of marketing to best serve the fans of a given team. Secondly, the landscape of professional football in South Africa will be examined, along with the cultural and historical aspects, which have influenced the way in which fans have largely monopolised the game. Finally, a structural overview of the ABSA Premiership in South Africa will be given, inclusive of both its strengths and weaknesses. Each of these can either stimulate or hinder loyalty amongst fans. The aim of this chapter is to provide a foundational understanding of the surroundings, within which fans are placed, before directly dealing with the factors that influence their loyalty. The issue of their loyalty will be attended to in Chapter 3.

### **2.2 Outlining the Football Landscape in South Africa**

It would be unfair to analyse the loyalty levels of the Cape Town City FC fans without having some sort of understanding of the context within which they have historically found themselves, and currently find themselves in. This relates to both the City of Cape Town and South Africa on the whole. In addition, it must be mentioned that the club participates in a league, in which by and large, there are two teams that occupy the hearts of the majority of fans in the country (SAFA, 2008 cited in Cornelisson, 2010). As such, many of the Cape Town City FC fans might view the team as a second favourite, either behind Kaizer Chiefs or Orlando Pirates; and this would naturally influence their behaviour in a certain way.

#### **2.2.1 An Overview of South African Football History**

More than any other sport in the country, football symbolises the insanity of apartheid. The white-only football association of South Africa (FASA) was formed in 1892. Bantus, Coloureds and Indians followed with similar associations. During the 1940s, some inter-race games did occur; but these were swiftly outlawed; once apartheid had kicked in (Bainbridge, 2009). Unfunded separate leagues are where non-whites would be found playing; while white people played in their own club competition. FASA

agreed to an inter-racial match, following the suspension of South Africa by FIFA in 1962 (Bainbridge, 2009). The ban on the country was subsequently lifted; however, conditions and ideologies remained much the same (Bainbridge, 2009). South Africa was expelled from FIFA after the minister of the interior at the time threatened to deny passports to anyone who attended an inter-racial game. While this resulted in the petering out of the game amongst white people, in the townships it yielded opposite results: the game thrived.

As on many other continents, for the masses, football became the vehicle of escape from the daily drudgery (Bainbridge, 2009); and it provided communities with pleasurable and memorable experiences (Cornelissen, 2007). It has; and it still does provide people a shared platform, which has played, and will continue to play a role in creating social dialogue (Chain & Swart, 2010).

Although precisely pinpointing the number of viewers is both difficult and a cause for argument, football passionately arouses a large portion of South Africa's sport enthusiasts. The sport is actively pursued by several millions of South Africans (Adonis, 2011; Onwumechili & Akindes, 2014). Indeed, in the dusty streets of the townships, few black South Africans will have grown up without kicking a ball. The game has cured many people's social and economic deficits; as it has provided financial freedom for poor young boys escaping from the poverty trap of these townships. A sort of freedom that they could not have ever imagined (Latakomo, 2010). Football stars are mimicked in street games; and they automatically become the heroes within their communities; once they have turned professional (Latakomo, 2010).

From a commercial point of view, the football industry has enjoyed phenomenal business success – despite the sluggish growth rate of the South African economy (Baller, 2015; Koortzen & Oosthuizen, 2012). Due to the unparalleled rate at which it is attracting sponsorship; it is argued that football is at its commercial pinnacle (Gedye, 2007). Investments in the sport are the key indicators of this trend. An illustration here is made by ABSA's 5-year R500 million investment, securing them the rights to call themselves the PSL's main sponsor (KickOff, 2011).

Another example of this is the significant amounts invested by Supersport to land the broadcasting rights for the PSL internationally. This figure is believed to amount to as much as R1.6 billion annually (KickOff, 2011). More significantly, the lucrative nature of the industry has allowed black South Africans to be in control of their own destiny; and it has even allowed them to make fortunes as owners. The only other sector where this has been possible has been the taxi industry (Latakomo, 2010). Thus, in the context of South Africa on the whole, the sport plays a significant social and commercial role in many people's lives.

As such, when it comes to supporting and remaining loyal to clubs in the country, such as Cape Town City FC, the reasoning may be found in the social benefits.

### 2.2.2 An Overview of Cape Town in South African Football Culture

Even though there is a big following in the Western Cape, the lion's share of media attention relates to rugby and cricket, rather than to football (Alegi, 2007). The group-areas' Act of 1950 imposed radical boundaries that significantly impacted people's experiences and responses. Contemporary Cape Town remains ambiguously a culturally diverse and divided city; as a result of these legacies (Field & Swanson, 2007). From the professional ranks, down to the grass-roots level, Cape Town football has been shaped by this social reality. In the working-class setting of the Cape Flats resides the core of Cape Town's football constituency. While some football matches get played in the area in which Athlone stadium is situated, the majority of them get played at the Cape Town stadium (Alegi, 2007).

This stadium is located on the Green point common, next to the V&A Waterfront and about two kilometres south of the city centre (Alegi, 2007). Therefore, while many white, middle and upper-class people live in inner suburbs, such as these, the stadium is worlds apart from the main football community of the city. Bearing this in mind, it is clear that the loyalty, or the lack thereof of Cape Town City FC fans cannot be analysed by solely looking at the issue of physical attendance. This is because while many people residing far away from the stadium may want to attend, it may not be possible – because of transportation and financial issues.

After looking at a brief history of football in South Africa and briefly probing the landscape of the game in both Cape Town itself and South Africa on the whole, the



next section will examine professional football in the country. To begin with, the reasons why professional South African football is worthy of study are examined below.

### **2.3 Importance of Studying South African Football**

The South African professional football industry has thrived, despite a wider national setting that has experienced trying difficult fiscal circumstances and slow economic growth. Backed by many consumers who, in support of their favourite clubs, have willingly invested money, football in South Africa has enjoyed sustained commercial success (Koortzen & Oosthuizen, 2012).

Of the national economy in South Africa, sport is a segment, in which in 2017, approximately R19.5 billion of the tourism and leisure sector was invested. In establishing sport as a recognised contributor to the overall gross domestic product in the country, this aforementioned investment has not gone unnoticed; and indeed, it has directly contributed to the success thereof (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015). As many as 54% of the entire adult populace in South Africa are estimated to be interested in sport (Saayman & Rossouw, 2008).

This large proportion of active consumers, coupled with the continued sponsorship attraction from major companies, means that the professional game in South Africa is well-positioned for continuous growth. This is even more so the case; if one considers the fact that the game is versatile enough to operate across different sectors. These include the media, retail and tourism. South Africa's most popular sport, according to the Department of Sport and Recreation (2014), is football; and the retention of this status appears likely (Gedye, 2007).

Through branches of commerce, such as infrastructural development, entertainment, retail, merchandise production and events management, the professional football industry in South Africa is an important employer of many people (De Burca, Brannick & Meenaghan, 2015). What fundamentally drives sport consumption amongst South African football fans, having acknowledged all the economic attributes of professional football, along with recognising its role in stimulating economic growth, remains rather limited. This is a matter of concern; because with regard to the expansion of the business of sport, it is clear that the fans form the most prominent role-player

(Madrigal, Hamill & Gill, 2013). This is because corporate sponsors who seek brand exposure are lured into investing in football, due to the large numbers of fans who consume the game (Koenderman, 2013). In addition, the commercial growth of major clubs is actively stimulated by fans investing in club products (Pichot, Tribou & O'Reilly, 2008). With this in mind, from both an empirical and pragmatic point of view, the limited understanding of football fans in South Africa has become a prominent and interesting research problem.

In order to better understand these fans, it becomes imperative to set the scene of the professional football sphere in South Africa. Once this has been done; it becomes easier to dissect the various ways, in which loyalty is either stimulated or hindered amongst fans within such a setting. Therefore, the following section attempts to give a comprehensive understanding of the South African league and the various other cup competitions in which the teams participate during the season.

### 2.3.1 The ABSA Premiership League

Linked to the South African Football Association (SAFA), the ABSA Premiership is the name used when referring to the National Soccer League (NSL). In South Africa, SAFA handles the management of the professional football league. The ABSA Premiership was founded in 1996 by Dr Ivan Khoza, Jomo Sono, Kaizer Motaung and Raymond Hack. Only 18 teams formed the league in its early years; however, two of these teams were de-registered by management. Due to a bottleneck of fixtures, that proved too difficult for management to govern, these measures were thought to be the best way forward (Guil, 2014). Currently, 16 teams make up the league (Morgan, 2015b). In every season, each team plays 30 games; and they are expected to have different kits for when they play in their home city; and when they travel to tackle a team in a different city (PSL, 2015a).

In the league, an ABSA Premiership team faces the other 15 teams twice. Once at home and once away (Mofokeng and Bevan-Dye, 2014); 3 points are awarded to a team as a result of a victory; 1 point is allocated to both teams in the case of a draw; and if a team loses, they earn no points (PSL, 2015a). The ABSA Premiership has only been won by 3 teams more than 3 times. These are, Kaizer Chiefs, Mamelodi Sundowns and Orlando Pirates. Currently, in terms of league titles, Mamelodi

Sundowns are the most decorated team in the country, having seven PSL championship titles to their name (Morgan, 2015b). On the other hand, Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates have each won 4 respective titles. Bidvest Wits are the current holders of this prestigious title. As seen in the table below, Cape Town City FC is yet to win the ABSA Premiership, thus underscoring its relatively young status in the league. In the club's inaugural season, it finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, behind Bidvest Wits and Mamelodi Sundowns.

Team	Year of Championship Victory
Manning Rangers	1997
Mamelodi Sundowns	1998
Mamelodi Sundowns	1999
Mamelodi Sundowns	2000
Orlando Pirates	2001
Santos	2002
Orlando Pirates	2003
Kaizer Chiefs	2004
Kaizer Chiefs	2005
Mamelodi Sundowns	2006
Mamelodi Sundowns	2007
SuperSport United	2008
SuperSport United	2009
SuperSport United	2010
Orlando Pirates	2011

Orlando Pirates	2012
Kaizer Chiefs	2013
Mamelodi Sundowns	2014
Kaizer Chiefs	2015
Mamelodi Sundowns	2016
Bidvest Wits	2017

Table 2.1: ABSA Premiership Titles 1996-2017

The battle for the ABSA Premiership title is not the only competition, in which the teams participate. The teams who have finished amongst the top 2 in the various African Leagues get admitted into the CAF Champions League the following season (Confederation of African Football, 2015). Therefore, to represent South Africa in the African Championship, the top two ABSA Premiership teams qualify automatically. With regard to African football, the CAF is the most prestigious title; since the teams compete for a better ranking within the continent. To date, only two South African teams have won the CAF title. Most recently, and as recently as October 2016 to be accurate, Mamelodi Sundowns were crowned champions of Africa. Similarly, Orlando Pirates also have their name forever engraved on the trophy, as a result of their triumph in 1995 (Orlando Pirates, 2015).

### 2.3.2 Premier Soccer League Sponsorship

The first ever league title Sponsor was South African Breweries (SAB) under their Castle Lager Brand (PSL, 2015c). This sponsorship spanned from 1997 until 2007. To cover soccer expenses for all the affiliated teams, Willy (2011) contended, professional football teams in South Africa were dependent on sponsorship from SAB to a large extent. R140 million was the figure attached to SAB's PSL sponsorship deal between 2002 and 2007. In September 2007, a 5-year sponsorship deal with ABSA worth R500 million rand was signed (Joseph, 2007). At the given time, in terms of sponsorships in South African sports, this was the most significant outlay in history (Tlou, 2010). The tournament's name changed to the ABSA Premiership from what was previously known as the Castle Premiership. ABSA announced, upon the ending of the initial 5-

year contract, the extension of this deal for a further 5-year period. This is expected to come to a conclusion at the end of the 2017 season (PSL, 2012). Professional teams within the league also attract their own sponsorship deals, apart from league sponsorship (Fullerton, 2007).

Ranked amongst the top 10 in a list of the biggest worldwide sponsorship revenues, a crucial role is played by sponsorships (Morgan, 2009). Three additional sponsorships of tournaments in the country also display the growth of the league. These tournaments are the MTN8, the Telkom Knockout, as well as the Nedbank Cup. As seen by the names, these tournaments have the backing of some of South Africa's biggest companies (PSL, 2015b). This financial backing is important for both the league and its respective clubs to both run efficiently and thrive. Accordingly, examining brand loyalty amongst fans is important because it can be the driving force of the financial success of individual clubs.

### 2.3.3 MTN 8

Formerly known as the Supa 8 or Top 8, at the beginning of each season, the MTN8 tournament is fiercely contested between the teams that finished in positions 1 through to 8 during the previous season. For simply participating, each team in the tournament is guaranteed R800 000; while the winner walks away with a cheque of R8 million. In the current season of the study at hand, Bidvest Wits were crowned MTN 8 Champions, having beaten Mamelodi Sundowns 3-0 in the final in October 2016.

### 2.3.4 The Telkom Knockout Challenge

In 2006, the Telkom Knockout tournament was launched by South African telecommunications giant Telkom (Lerman, 2006). Different names, including Rothmans and Coca-Cola have donned the title of the trophy. The tournament first took place in 1992; and it has been a feature of each season ever since its inception. The competition is battled out in the first half of each season; and it consists of all 16 teams in the league. The 16 teams play in knock-out rounds to kick-off the competition. Proceeding after these rounds, the quarter finals, semi-finals and the final follow. The winners of the competition receive R4 million in prize money. After the MTN8 and the Nedbank Cup (to be detailed below), the Telkom Knockout is the third most lucrative cup competition domestically (Morgan, 2015b). The most successful team in the

history of the tournament is Kaizer Chiefs, who have lifted the prestigious trophy a record eight times (Telkom, 2014). In the current season, the tournament was won by Cape Town City FC; as they defeated SuperSport United 2-1 in the final in December 2016.

#### 2.3.5 The Nedbank Cup

The sponsorship of a final knockout cup competition in the country was announced in 2008 by financial group, Nedbank. ABSA Premiership teams play against both first division teams and amateur teams during the course of this tournament. This is the first competition in South African football that provides such an opportunity for lower league teams. In total, the competition is contested between 32 teams. All 16 PSL teams are given an automatic qualification for the tournament. Additionally, from the NFD (National First Division), eight teams are represented. Finally, chosen clubs from SAFA structures, such as the SAB league and the Motsepe ABC make up the last eight teams to participate in the competition (Khan & September, 2015).

By scouting the talent around all nine South African provinces, the tournament allows for professional teams to be exposed to young and upcoming players (PSL, 2015d). R20 million makes up the overall prize money for the tournament. The knockout stages form the basis of how the financial rewards are distributed between the teams. The winner of the tournament receives a R7 million cheque; while the remaining R13 million is, based on their ranking in the duration of the tournament, distributed to all the other teams which have participated (PSL, 2015d).

Having defeated Orlando Pirates in the 2017 edition of the competition, SuperSport United is the current holder of the trophy.



Figure 2.1: Overview of various competitions in Professional South African Football

Based on sponsorships, media coverage, and tournament size, the ABSA Premiership has shown tremendous growth, since the competition's inception in 1996. Tournament sizes, earnings and sponsorships have already been discussed above. As such, media coverage will be attended to below.

### 2.3.6 Media Coverage

Within the context of this study, media coverage plays a significant role. This is because it is the medium through which clubs like Cape Town City FC get exposure to the wider public and the more one gets exposed to something, the easier it is to build a relationship. Before the South African League changed from the NFL to the PSL in 1996 (South African history online, 2015), the first broadcaster of the competition was SABC media (both TV and radio). Upon the name change in 1996, the contract with SABC media continued for a further 10 years, ending in 2006 (Funde, 2007). Thereafter, Supersport won the television rights bid in 2007 for all PSL games spanning the next 5 years (News24, 2011). Supersport were victorious in their bid to attain television rights for the second consecutive time in 2011. However, a lot of controversy followed; as SuperSport had obtained the rights. This was because SuperSport is only available to DSTV subscribers; and not everyone has DSTV. Naturally, that means that not everyone had access to the matches. As a consequence, some matches were outsourced to SABC by SuperSport (Morgan, 2015a). Additionally, in 2012, the SABC were granted the broadcasting rights for 11 of their radio stations. and thereby, they strengthened the league's media coverage (PSL, 2012b).

Throughout Africa and in some European countries, the South African ABSA Premiership matches could be viewed (Morgan, 2015b). The growth of the league has been strengthened due to this extended media coverage. The league has gone from a ranking of 30<sup>th</sup> in the world into the top 10 (Hawkes, 2011).

While media coverage has helped assist the growth of the league, it is not without its drawbacks. For example, a reportedly R1 billion five-year deal to grant exclusive rights of broadcast to SuperSport in 2007 is a significant issue within the context of the realms of this study (Mcetywa and Charter, 2007). The sale of its broadcasting rights to Supersport ensured that the PSL faced a wave of controversy. Huge sums of money would be generated by the PSL, as a result of the sale of broadcasting rights. An improved local football scene was seen as one of the perceived benefits that accompanied the sale. In fact, the sale received much support from a number of directors and senior members of local football alike. It was envisaged as a step forward for the game in the country. This was in terms of ensuring that players received better salaries, increasing the ability of local clubs to be administratively run better; and finally, that the level of coverage by television would be much enhanced (Mcetywa and Charter, 2007). Indeed, the sale can be termed as a major success from an economic point of few. However, just as the deal received praise in some quarters; so too it met its fair share of criticism. The basis of this criticism is perhaps a key point in the argument of this document, revolving around the loyalty of South African Football fans.

An argument for the critics of the deal was the fact that it would indirectly mean that access to games would only be afforded to the wealthier members of society. SuperSport broadcasting the games necessitated the paying of DSTV subscription fees for anyone who would be keen on watching. Many felt that these subscription fees were beyond of the financial means of the majority of the local football fans in the country. The decision to award the rights to SuperSport, according to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), meant that when it came to their favourite sport on television, millions of South Africans would be unable to watch (Mcetywa and Charter, 2007).

Consequently, the lack of widespread coverage naturally plays an important role when it comes to the loyalty, or the lack thereof of the fans.



The league and various cup competitions within the professional footballing landscape of South Africa have been described above. With this understanding in mind, the various conditions within this given setting can be examined. The overall strengths and weaknesses of the league on the whole will come into play. The combination of the two makes it easier to make a fair assessment on the loyalty of Cape Town City FC fans, having considered the landscape in which they now find themselves.

## **2.4 Strengths of the ABSA Premiership**

Clubs in South Africa are amongst the best organised in Africa; as the ABSA Premiership is the richest club football league on the continent. Therefore, the smooth running is ensured as a result of the additional funds in the system. Club licensing regulations were adopted by SAFA in 2012; and a clear corporate structure forms part of each club in the PSL. This is in stark contrast to many of the other leagues in Africa (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). Clubs also have access to some of the best infrastructure on the continent; as major investments were made regarding the stadia and supporting infrastructure, due to the 2010 FIFA World Cup (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

### **2.4.1 Club Structures**

Private ownership can be found at all PSL clubs. This is somewhat different to other countries in Africa, such as Kenya, Egypt and Nigeria. Numerous factors account for this more homogeneous structure in South Africa. These include; but they are not limited to, the wider economy and the superior development of the league system of South Africa in relation to the aforementioned countries (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). What this means is that, in general, there is less of a reliance on government support in South Africa; as there is more money in the game due to a wide range of potential private owners. South African clubs, beyond the contributions of their respective owners, have a much more diverse revenue system. Additionally, clubs are a more viable commercial proposition for prospective owners due to the fact that an ABSA Premiership 'franchise' can be freely transferred (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

## **2.5 Issues of the ABSA Premiership**

Various issues confronting the ABSA Premiership are:

### **2.5.1 Infrastructure**

While it can be argued that the access to world-class infrastructure due to the 2010 World Cup is a positive for PSL clubs; on a wider scale, even the bigger clubs in South Africa are reliant on local government for the use of this infrastructure. This is despite additional finance being available in South African football. For example, owned by the City of Johannesburg and operated by Stadium Management South Africa, the FNB has served as the home ground for Kaizer Chiefs. Cape Town stadium, the home of Cape Town City FC, is another prime example of the lack of financial sustainability of the venues (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). The 55 000-seat stadium has drained the coffers of the city council by around R42 million a year in maintenance costs. There is a serious lack of income to offset this heavy expenditure (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

### **2.5.2 Disengaged Supporters**

Since the apartheid days, when the struggles around unity and legitimacy directed so much energy, South African football has come a long way. In contemporary times, it has come to face a different kind of challenge. Indeed, it is a challenge that African, and third-world football in general, face together (Buhlungu, 2006).

Increasingly, football has become the property of multinational business – even though the game was once that of the working class. Both directly and indirectly, the game now revolves around television and the income that this medium brings in (Buhlungu, 2006). The ever-growing domination of a couple of major clubs based in a few European Leagues and the UEFA Champions League, can be seen as a result of the increasing commercial disparity between those leagues and other leagues around the world.

Italy, Germany, Spain and England are primarily the leagues which front this domination (Buhlungu, 2006).

South African football finds itself in a space; where it is basically forced into following an attempt to live up to this model. A model, in which both within and between footballing nations of the world, the inequalities are intensified (Buhlungu, 2006). South African football has to battle for players, sponsorships and most importantly, in terms of the purpose of this paper, audiences with the heavily marketed and televised European football leagues. As if these challenges weren't difficult enough in isolation, they are not helped at all by the fact that the South African game has to deal with a historical legacy of disarray (Buhlungu, 2006). As such, the ability of South African clubs to build a more engaged fan base is limited; due to the fact that various supporters' groups are devoted to these European clubs (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). In addition, when it comes to ownership and control over football clubs in South Africa, there are currently no formal structures through which supporters can become involved.

Informal supporters' groups are the primary vehicle for engagement (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

### 2.5.3 Dwindling Attendance Figures

Only about 13 000 fans per game were attracted to league matches during the 1960s (Fletcher, 2012). From 1996 onwards, as the ABSA Premiership was introduced, more fans were attracted to games in comparison with previous years. However, from the 2013 season, match attendance started to dwindle (Tomvil, 2014). In fact, generally speaking, only derby matches attract more supporters. An example of this would be the Soweto Derby mentioned above, battled out between Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates. This is arguably the only match in South Africa that can fill our stadiums to their maximum capacity (Mabasa, 2012).

The ability of South African clubs to increase both match day and general commercial revenue is hindered by the lack of supporter engagement (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). Firstly, matches that do not involve Kaizer Chiefs or Pirates regularly receive a poor attendance record, which can span from 500 to 5 000 spectators (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). Secondly, as mentioned already, television represents a massive challenge to the clubs in South Africa; and the numerous foreign leagues on display tend to dominate

the mind of the South African spectator (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

From a league perspective, engagement can be hindered by the ability of club licences to be freely traded. In doing so, some community's interests are not protected; and this makes long-term engagement harder to sustain. For example, in order to reduce league costs and fixtures, two franchises were bought out and dissolved by the PSL in 2002 (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). A further problem faced by clubs, that if sold would help them further engage with fans, is the fact that they do not own the infrastructure, such as their own stadiums. This is hindering from a commercial point of view; as it means that the financial foundations remain weak (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). Additionally, within their respective communities, this also means that they lack a physical presence (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

Finally, on account of their popularity, disproportionate support is given to Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs in comparison with the rest of the teams in the league. Both competitive balance and financial sustainability are affected by this uneven distribution of sponsorship revenue (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

In both the short and the long-term, the above factors limit the efficacy of clubs to a certain extent. From the centralised TV and sponsorship deals, the teams in the league receive a strong core of income (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014). However, the aforementioned factors do not assist in helping the respective teams capitalise on this strong core. What this means in the long term is that club sustainability is threatened. In doing so, the ability of teams to invest and develop effective development programmes for the youth is compromised (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

In the shorter-term, it becomes difficult for teams to keep hold of their top performers, due to less disposable income being available. What this naturally translates into is the reduction of the on-field product for the support base, which makes it easier for them to turn their focus to the 'superior' European football product (First Africa Football Report: Club Structures and Licensing, 2014).

## **2.6 Sport as an Interesting Avenue of Study**

Sport on a general level of human interaction is an interesting avenue for study; because it can be argued that it is a mirror of society, composed of all its assets, flaws and battles (Boxill, 2003). So too, on a marketing level, it provides much intrigue. The previous chapter made mention of how professional sporting organisations' have become businesses. As such, there are certain nuances between the management of a sporting organisation and that of a more generic business. These distinctions lead the charge for interrogation from a marketing perspective, so as to ensure that the fans are being satisfied in the best way possible. Profitability, sustainability and the satisfaction of fans through team performance are constant and concurrent pressures faced by sporting organisations. The pathway to ensuring this aforementioned financial stability without the compromise of any sporting performance objectives, is through marketing (Adrian, 2015).

More specifically, relationship-oriented marketing reigns supreme within this industry. This orientation is seen as the most useful way to create and maintain long-term relationships with the extremely demanding fans (Ranjbarian and Barari, 2009).

To further understand the important role that marketing can play; when it comes to the loyalty of football fans in South Africa, the landscape of the country's top professional league is addressed. Namely, the support within the league is dominated by two of the most popular teams in the country, Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs. According to some sources, 75% of football fans actually support either one of them, leaving the remaining 25% of fans to be shared amongst the 14 other teams in the league (SAFA, 2008 cited in Cornelisson, 2010).

In addition to this, globalization has brought about the creation of what has been termed as electronic fans. Simply put, there is a common trend that fans in the country prefer to watch European football, rather than their local product. These specific challenges, amongst others, faced by clubs, such as Cape Town City within this league, make it clear that the loyalty of fans is unlikely to grow organically; and a push in the right direction is needed.

Sport in general, as an interesting avenue of research, the unique features of sport and the differentiation between the management of sporting organisations and more

generic businesses kick off this chapter. Thereafter, the theory of sport marketing and relationship marketing is addressed. This is specifically highlighted to show the growing relevance and impact of the latter; as one of the effective management tools used to foster loyalty in the previously mentioned sporting organisations. With this in mind, the chapter is able to evolve in focus and start specifically zooming into football. A brief overview of the history of the sport is given; and this is followed by why the professional game is an intriguing avenue of study. An outline of the various competitions within the professional structure is given. Finally, the various specific strengths and challenges that may aid or hinder loyalty within this landscape are discussed. Subsequently, the chapter is concluded.

In many strong ways, sport is a mirror of society (Eitzen, 2001). It shares basic elements and expressions with the society at large. In which it finds itself in. This relates to aspects, such as commercialisation, exploitation, sexism, greed, racism, bureaucratization, alienation, racism and so forth (Smiles, 2012). The society, in which we operate, as argued by many, is mirrored in sports. Composed of all its assets, flaws and battles, sport is a society in miniature (Boxill, 2003).

On the most basic level, those people who live within society play sports. The characters of those people are brought out; as they face the trials and tribulations of a game at hand. An effective medium is provided by sport that brings out both the worst and best in human beings. Just as corruption persists in society; so too is it prevalent in sport. Similarly, just as society is burdened with drug use, so too is sport. Finally, just as acts of violence are found in many forms in society, neither are they rare in sports (Boxill, 2003). Conversely, there are also numerous ways in which sport mirrors society in a positive way. For example, similar to society, successes and heroic role models are found in sports. Likewise, just as one's conduct in society is governed by rules; so too is one's conduct in the sporting arena. Much like a dramatic presentation, sport magnifies certain aspects of society (Boxill, 2003).

Additionally, no matter what sport is being played, often the game at hand is transcended by something far greater. In such a fragmented world, sport allows for one to identify and connect with what feels like something that is more significant than oneself. Bonds are formed with strangers through a mutual identification with a sports team. It brings together people from different walks of life into one arena (Lo, 2011).

Therefore, on a general level of human interaction; sport has features that make it an interesting area of study. These features both positively and negatively reflect the society, which sport occupies.

In line with the scope of this paper, on a marketing level, sport also contains certain nuances, which make it an intriguing avenue of study. This is primarily based on the management of sport; and the way in which it differs slightly in comparison with more generic businesses. These unique features are detailed in the section below.

## **2.7 The Unique Features of Sport**

From a management perspective, sport has an ambiguous history. Traditionally speaking, two contrasting philosophical views have divided the management of sport (Stewart & Smith, 1999). On one end of the spectrum, there is the view that the application of standard business practices does not work within the sporting sphere. That, because of its features, a business-centric approach would not only ruin social relevance, history, tribal links and emotional connections; but it would also lead to poor management decisions (Smith & Stewart, 2010). On the other hand, due to it being subject to customer demands, government regulations and market pressures, sport from an alternative point of view is seen as just another generic business enterprise.

Accordingly, from this perspective, to apply standard business tools is imperative, in order for management to be effective. These tools are in relation to finance, human-resource management, strategy, and most importantly in the terms of this paper, marketing (Smith & Stewart, 2010). Due to the corporatisation of sport, along with the academic discipline of sport management emerging, these divisions have been blurred. What complicates sport within this narrative, is the fact that like art, education, theatre, music and other cultural services, it occurs in both non-profit and profit forms. Conversely, it does inevitably contain some features that distinguish it from traditional business forms (Smith & Stewart, 2010).

The next section will briefly discuss the various characteristics and stakeholders involved in professional sporting organisations – before examining the aforementioned similarities and differences between the running of the said organisation in comparison to the running of a more generic business.

### 2.7.1 Professional Sporting Organisations' Characteristics and Stakeholders

The main sources of income for sports clubs many decades ago were membership fees and gate receipts; since the majority of them had voluntary staff and operated on a non-professional level. In recent times, in terms of the number of employees and annual turnover, sporting organisations can be compared to medium-sized companies. A considerable portion of revenue is still sourced from gate receipts and membership fees (Nufer & Buhler, 2011). However, in comparison to additional revenue streams that have become available, these two traditional ones have become less important.

Sponsorship and television revenues currently make up the lion share of annual turnover of many sporting entities. At least at the top level, an additional important source of income comes from commercial revenues, such as licensing and hospitality, as well as merchandising (Nufer & Buhler, 2011). Reflected in sports development towards a serious business is another important aspect. That is, the type of people who are now working within the business sphere of the sporting organisation. Management professionals who know how to run a business are now increasingly found as the key decision-makers of sports organisations (Nufer & Buhler, 2011).

When it comes to the stakeholders of professional sports entities, similar types characterize each entity; because all of them must come to terms with the unique characteristics of the industry and those of the sporting product, regardless of their size and importance (Nufer & Buhler, 2011). If the definition of a customer is one who purchases a product and or service; then for professional sports clubs, the identification of three primary customers can be made (Nufer & Buhler, 2011). That is: the media; the fans; and the sponsors. To gain something in return, all three groups pay the sporting organisation. Exclusive broadcasting rights are purchased by the media; fans pay for match tickets; and communication rights are bought by sponsors. Usually, sporting organisations do not receive any payment from all the other stakeholders. As a matter of fact, for example, suppliers and employees even get paid (Nufer & Buhler, 2011).



In order to achieve a positive relationship that is beneficial to both parties, companies have to treat all their stakeholders as customers from a modern marketing perspective (Nufer & Buhler, 2011). Sporting organisations are no different.

Having obtained a snapshot of what makes sport worthy of study, the unique aspects of sport and the characteristics and stakeholders that comprise a sporting enterprise, it is now possible to make an argument for demarcating the management of a sporting organisation from that of a generic business. The reason this is important is because the marketing of a sporting organisation falls under the umbrella of the above-mentioned management.

### 2.7.2 Differentiating Sports and Business

Essentially, the same considerations of other forms of business management are found in sport. However, a range of contextual oddities guide the specific application of these forms. Therefore, the management of sport necessitates customised adjustments (Hoye, Nicholson & Smith, 2008). For example, product innovation, market expansion, branding, value creation and the funding of new sources of revenue are all common goals shared by both business and sport. Yet, channelling the passions of employees (players) and customers (fans), along with winning trophies, beating rivals and the sharing of revenue, there is of a much more significant concern for a sporting organisation in comparison to a generic business (Foster, Greyser & Walsh, 2006). Furthermore, as they are influential in terms of media exposure and attracting sponsors and fans, the employees of the sports organisation (the players/athletes) are business assets.

Accordingly, in comparison to club managers and any other immediate supervisors, these players earn a much greater amount. At the end of the day, they are the service deliverers of the sporting organisation. This is a unique feature that would not be found in a generic business setting (Foster, Greyser & Walsh).

The various similarities and differences are delineated below, in order to propose a customised set of practices – when it comes to the management of professional sporting organisations.

### 2.7.3 Resemblances and Variations

Management theorists, sociologists, lawyers and historians have lead the charge of the integration of various perspectives into professional sports over the last two decades (Smith & Stewart, 2010). Sport is both, on the balance of their findings, culturally unique, as well as being commercially distinct (Smith & Stewart, 2010). Traditionally, two specific issues have received the lion's share of attention from academics; when it comes to the differences between sport and business. These are, firstly, that sport is characterised by undying fan loyalty (Pine & Gilmore, 1999); and secondly, that sport prioritises field success more than commercial prowess; this is clearly different to most business modes of thinking (Stewart & Smith, 1999).

The contextual weightings of the similarities between 'conventional' business and professional sport have changed over time. Every strategic turn in the management of sport is complicated by a paradox of both a structural and operational nature (Rein et al., 2006). A two-edged sword is an adept word to describe the commercial progress of sport and the corporatisation thereof that has followed. From one point of view, by changing its features, sport is provided with the opportunity to tap into new markets. However, this is juxtaposed with the fact that all the traditions that attracted fans to the club in the first place, are fractured in the process of doing this (Smith & Stewart, 2010). Nevertheless, it is safe to say that along with the mentioned wider market share, brand strengthening and profit generation are both the concerns of sport and business (Smith & Stewart, 2010).

Concurrently, it is difficult to defend the view that strong identification, loyalty and passion monopolise sport (Smith & Stewart, 2010). It can be argued that four distinguishing factors separate business and sport. To begin with, unpredictability reigns supreme; when it comes to sporting matters. In order for a minimum level of quality to be guaranteed, along with the creation of a level playing field, frequent hands-on management is required (Stewart & Smith, 1999). Secondly, numerous anti-competitive practices can occur in sport (Macdonald & Booth, 2007). If similar occurrences took place within the conventional business environment, many business CEOs would find themselves behind bars. Thirdly, in other spheres of commerce, the level of scrutiny and the standards that players in the sporting industry are held up to (Hess et al., 2008), would not be tolerated. Finally, the mobility of players between

teams, perceiving them as assets that earn income, along with their constant ratings, are features that you would be pressed to find in a different business industry (Smith & Stewart, 2010).

Therefore, there are still distinctive features for a customised set of management practices to be justified in professional sport; even though it has experienced operational and structural changes over time. One said management practice, which specifically relates to the focus of this study, is that of marketing.

## **2.8 Sports Marketing**

The main reason for the existence of sports entities is the consumer of the sport event itself (Adrian, 2015). Sporting organisations are under pressure to concurrently generate profits and to be sustainable; while also ensuring the satisfaction of fans through the performance of the team (Adrian, 2015). Throughout, a comprehensive approach, satisfying and fulfilling both the desires and the needs of the consumers, is the primary concern of sports marketing (Adrian, 2015). This is not dissimilar from any other form of marketing. It is, however, important to make a distinction between using sport as a tool of marketing – and marketing the sporting activity itself.

In simple terms, what is being referred to is the difference between marketing through sport and the marketing of sport itself (Merz & Fullerton, 2005).

Using a sporting event as a core product that would instigate the purchase of other related products from the sport consumer relates to the concept of the first category mentioned. When it comes to the latter, sporting activity is used to promote a product through the associations the product has with the said sports activity (Merz & Fullerton, 2005). This differs from the first category; in that the product in question is not sports-related; whereas in the first category it is. The most obvious example of this is that of sponsorship contracts. For example, with a certain product or company, an athlete or club would associate their name with the intention of promotion through the means of transferring their popularity and approval of the said brand.

Overall, without compromising the completion of objectives, based on sporting performance, marketing is the pathway to ensuring the financial stability of a sports organisation (Adrian, 2015). A specific kind of sports marketing has become prominent

in recent years, in order to create and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between the sporting entities and their customers. Termed as relationship-marketing, this concept will now be described.

### 2.8.1 Relationship-Marketing

To represent the nature of relationship-marketing, theorists have developed a range of conceptual definitions. Relationship-marketing from a service perspective, according to Berry (1983), relates to attracting, maintaining and enhancing customer relationships. Gronroos (1995) agrees with the aforementioned definition, when it comes to the application from a network perspective. However, he includes the goal of making a profit in the definition, so as to benefit all the parties involved. Finally, a process occurs to ensure strong and lasting relationships with the customers. This is the way Jackson (1985) views relationship-marketing: from a service perspective.

What is common amongst all of these definitions is the idea of interactions of the organisation: attracting, maintaining and enhancing mutually beneficial relationships with the customers (Harwood et al., 2008). Due to the fact that parties other than the buyer and seller are involved, when it comes to relationship-marketing; Buhler and Nufer (2010) propose the following definition for this type of marketing in sport:

*“Relationship-marketing in sports refers to the ‘establishment and maintenance of positive, enduring and mutually beneficial relations between professional sporting organisations and their stakeholders.’”*

An important part of marketing practice in the modern day is relationship-marketing (Egan, 2001; Veloutsou, Saren & Tzokas, 2002). For nearly three decades, the attention of both practitioners and academics has been attracted to relationship-marketing. A transaction and exchange orientation for a large part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has been the focus of marketers. What this means is that there was a drive to acquire new customers (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Over the last two decades, firms have been almost forced into rethinking this focus, due to the business environmental changes (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2000). The prominence of relationship marketing has been argued as a marketing-paradigm shift (Gronroos, 1996; Gummesson, 1993). Aspects, such as the reduced costs of marketing, increased profits, greater retention of customers, and improved loyalty from them, are some of the main benefits of

relationship-marketing (Berry, 1995). Simply put, this shift in focus has been directed in the way of the retention and loyalty of customers, rather than the acquisition thereof. This can be put down to the increased nature of competitive intensity (Dick & Basu, 1994). The tracking of customers' expectations is an imperative practice for a modern-day firm; as high consumer expectations are one of the most prominent highlights of many consumer markets. A co-operative and collaborative relationship between the firm and the consumer is seen as the best way to address these expectations (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2000; Copulsky & Wolf, 1990). Accordingly, a move to a relational orientation, from a transactional orientation is a conscious move made by businesses today (Dwyer, Shurr & Oh, 1987).

### 2.8.2 The Popularity of Relationship-Marketing

In the service economy, it is easy to notice the presence of relationship-marketing. Marketing a service is challenging (Zeithaml, Gremler, Bitner & Pandit, 2006), due to the intangibility, perishability and simultaneous production and consumption that characterize this type of business (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). In addition, not all customer 'touches' are under the direct control of those who produce the service; even though there are many of them (Bitner, Brown & Meuter, 2000).

A perfect example of one such service industry is the arena of professional sports (Kim, Trail, Woo & Zhang, 2011; Shani, 1997). Since customers or fans are extremely demanding (Bolchover & Brady, 2002); and they display high support for the team (Shani, 1997); although customer orientation reigns supreme. Therefore, the economic prosperity of a sports team is determined by a well-satisfied clientele (McDonald, Sutton & Milne, 1995). As such, a relational orientation is required of teams, when approaching customers, with a long-term view dictating many of the actions (Irwin, Zwick & Sutton, 1999). Some type of relationship-marketing is carried out in all transactions of sports marketing (Bee & Kahle, 2006).

Long-term relationship development is supported in sport, because of the high volume of emotionally attached consumers to the team at hand. Due to the fact that they will constantly attend matches and purchase team products, regardless of on-field performances; devoted fans remain profitable (Kim et al., 2011). Costs are reduced; purchases are increased; and in turn, so too is profitability due to long-term devoted

customers (Kim et al., 2011). It is within the interest of organisations to cultivate relationships continuously; as these then become a source of competitive advantage over the rivals.

Having understood the similarities and differences between the running of a sporting organisation and a generic business, and then going through the ways in which marketing, and especially relationship-marketing assists the positive management of the sporting entity, it only makes sense to move on to the next logical point of call. That is, considering that this paper revolves around the loyalty, or the lack thereof of football fans, it makes sense to examine the effect that the marketing of a relational nature has on customers' loyalty.

### 2.8.3 Effect of Relationship-Marketing on Consumer Loyalty

A growing trend in sport is the notion of referring to fans as customers; and there is a well-accepted recognition that a relationship-marketing approach can only benefit sporting organisations (Cohen, 1996). Better sports-marketing research, increased entertainment and leisure options, together with increasing innovation in technology, have all been cited as reasons for the relationship-marketing embrace by sporting organisations. This has been recognised, in order to combat the greater competitive challenges that the said reasons bring about (McDonald & Milne, 1997). Particularly due to technology advances, the development of relationship-marketing continues to evolve (Sheth, 2002). In modern culture, sport is considered to have a unique role (Kahle, Kambara and Rose, 1996). Substantial profits have been brought to a number of sport-related industries, due to the increasingly large number of sporting events' followers found across the globe (Lavarie & Arnett, 2000).

In competitive markets, the main factor in obtaining loyalty and success is customers' satisfaction (Kumar, 2004). As such, attracting customer satisfaction is imperative. Accordingly, to efficiently find out the needs of customers and to effectively meet them, relationship-marketing tries to create a very close relationship with customers. The cost of providing a service to a loyal customer, as argued by some research, equates to as much as 5 to 6 times cheaper than obtaining a new customer. This is in comparison with the cost of attracting a new customer and providing him/her with a service (Ndubisi, 2005). Therefore, the biggest effect that relational-oriented marketing

has on customer loyalty is quite simply the creation and maintenance of a relationship between customers. This relationship is mutually beneficial, which in turn, makes the formation of loyalty much more beneficial (Kiani, Mozaffari & Rad, 2015).

Up to this point, what makes sport unique and worthy of study has been looked at, along with the various characteristics involved in the positive management of sporting entities. In addition, the specific conditions surrounding the South African professional football industry have been detailed. It is quite evident that certain aspects of the league can inspire loyalty; while others can hinder it. Within this setting, of clubs battling it out for a loyal fan base within this league, two are of the greatest concern. That is, the lack of physical presence of clubs, such as the Cape Town City FC, due to the lack of their own infrastructure and the popularity of European football. The latter requires further observation and analysis; and as such, it will now be detailed. It will be looked at from the perspective of globalisation, epitomised by the media's role in the rising popularity of European football clubs.

## **2.9 The Globalisation of Football**

Termed as an era of 'media colonialism', McPhail (2006), perceived the global media-scape as a domination of major media conglomerates in less-developed countries. This relates to both the airwaves and the tabloids. In contemporary times, the perception of colonialism is through the lens of western dominance in cultural, technological and economic arenas. This dominance is seen in one of two paradoxical ways. Firstly, as a dominance which improves everything; and secondly, as one that destroys everything (Short & Kim, 1999). Globalization too has been seen in very different lights by scholars. Some have argued that things, such as an improvement in political freedom, lifestyle and environmental standards have been a direct result of this process. Others have suggested that the social division and deep economic issues can be blamed on the process of globalization (Onyebueke, 2015).

Relating to the topic at hand, what comes into question is the extent to which the falling of support for local South African teams, as epitomized in the low stadium attendances, can be attributed to the rise of transnational football broadcasting, together with the devotion to electronic fandom.

### 2.9.1 Internationalisation and New Fandom

In continuing the efforts of social-science disciplines to understand current globalization processes, football, being arguably the world's most globalized and popular sport, has been implicated (Milanovic, 2005). From rural England in medieval times to world-wide prominence currently, the diffusion of the game has emphasized the process of internationalization as preceding globalization. That is, across the world in different regions, the adoption of football (referred to as internationalization) has helped the process of globalization; as it has created a healthy environment, in which it can occur. In this regard, the role of television has been vital to create this impetus (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2004). Global media co-operations like NBC and Sky, as a result of global-media reforms, have provided the support for most publicly owned television stations and subscription-based satellite television to operate without borders (Alegi, 2010). With football becoming globalized, a prominent feature of this process is the explosion in numbers of what Cleland (2011) has termed as 'the electronic fans of overseas' sweethearts'. That is, those who, through television and other forms of media, support and are loyal to overseas teams.

This is not to say that these fans exist only in South Africa though. It has become a global occurrence. However, in a typical feature of cultural globalization, fan patronage for less-celebrated clubs and leagues, especially in developing countries, has slumped; while elite clubs and bigger leagues attract all the glitz and glamour (Milanovic, 2005). Milanovic (2005) argues that football aficionados have been provided with a plethora of additional pleasures through the many televised live matches of the most important games and leagues all over Europe.

These leagues are seen to be of an enhanced quality; and therefore, it could be argued that local football interest diminishes; as the quality is not considered to be up to scratch.

### 2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the nuances between the management of sport and the generic forms of businesses have been highlighted. Without the compromise of sporting performance, marketing is the pathway to the financial stability of sports teams. As such, an interrogation from a marketing perspective was seen as the result of these



distinctions. Furthermore, the landscape of South African professional football has been addressed, in various ways, in order to show the challenges faced by both teams and the fans alike, with regard to the building of a loyal fan base. It would be unfair to analyse the loyalty levels of football fans without being cognisant of this setting in which they find themselves. This is to determine whether this mentioned setting helps to stimulate or indeed to hinder this said loyalty.

Having acknowledged the context, within which the fans find themselves, the next chapter can come into play. It specifically focuses on both the intrinsic and the extrinsic factors that would drive people towards sports consumption and their subsequent loyalty.

## **CHAPTER 3: EXTRINSIC AND INTRINSIC INFLUENCES ON LOYALTY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter pays attention to the various factors that drive loyalty, or could cause disloyalty amongst the fans. It is structured in the following way. Motivation to become a fan and identification with a team is addressed, in terms of the respective definitions and in relation to fan loyalty. Various intrinsic and extrinsic influences are analysed, with the focus on the fans of Cape Town City FC, as the context of this study. It becomes clear that all individuals are not inspired by the same things; and this leads to the presentation of different fan typologies. Finally, the remaining section looks at the role of brands in sports marketing and consumer loyalty.

The three objectives of the study are constantly revisited and argued throughout the chapter. These relate to the analysis of loyalty levels displayed by the fans, the factors that influence loyalty and the reasons behind the lack of loyalty. As a consequence of reading this chapter, which serves as the foundation to the methodology (Chapter 4) and the following results (Chapter 5), sports marketers will have a theoretical background into the dynamic context within which fan loyalty is developed and maintained.

### **3.2 Extrinsic and Intrinsic Influences for being a Fan**

In the Absa Premiership, theoretical gaps exist in the understanding of the unique motivations for being a fan in South Africa; as the investigation into the antecedents of fan loyalty has been minimal.

#### **3.2.1 Sport-Fan Motivation**

Sport-fan motivation refers to the driving factors behind team support. These relate to, amongst other things; why individuals watch and attend games; why they buy merchandise; and why they stay loyal to the team that they support (Thibiti, 2004). It outlines an activated state within a person, represented by internal factors that awaken, dictate and stimulate behaviour (Pritchard, Funk & Alexandris, 2009). As fans are the primary source of revenue for the team, understanding what makes them highly motivated is important. Because loyal fans represent most repeat customers,

the fundamental goal of marketing managers is to foster brand loyalty (Fortunato, 2008).

Despite sport's increasing prominence, the reasons as to why individuals are willing to invest their time, money and emotions into the following and the watching of sports remains ambiguous (Sloan, 1989). Numerous psychological and social motivations have been identified by researchers, as a means of understanding consumption behaviours. These motivations have predominantly been used to create and authenticate measures that classify the interests and motivations of fans (Smith & Stewart, 2007).

A substantial amount of theoretical models regarding fan motivations has come to the fore in recent decades. The Sport-Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS), presented by Wann in 1995, has proved to be somewhat of a landmark in the area of focus. The scale outlines eight motivations, including escape, economic gains, group affiliation, family motives, eustress, self-esteem, and entertainment.

In 1999, a Motivations of Sport Consumer (MSC) scale was presented by Milne and McDonald; and this scale differed only slightly from the SFMS. It highlighted 12 sport-fan motivation factors, inclusive of competition, stress release, skill mastery, risk-taking, self-actualisation, aggression, affiliation, value development, aesthetics, social facilitation, and vicarious achievement.

The developed scales have all shed light on the dimensions of sport-spectator motives; however, several researchers have also acknowledged issues in the existing scales, primarily in the areas of content validity, psychometric limitations, and applicability (Funk, Mahony, Nakazawa, & Hirakawa, 2001; Trail & James, 2001). After discovering the limitations of previous scales, the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) was established by Trail and James (2001). This scale contains nine fan motives: achievement, acquisition of knowledge, aesthetics, drama, escape, family, physical attraction, physical skill, and social interaction.

Although the MSSC initially revealed sound psychometric properties, a scale covering a wide range of concepts and settings is desirable for general research purposes. According to Sloan (1989), individuals may be attracted to different sporting events for different reasons; thus, the applicability of spectator motivation scales may differ from

situation to situation. In an effort to comprehensively capture a broad range of motivational factors, Funk et al. (2001) developed the Sport-Interest Inventory (SII); and they did this by incorporating the related theories and research findings of previous studies on spectator motivations (Sloan, 1989; Wann, 1995).

<b>SFMS (Wann, 1995)</b>	<b>MSC (Milne and McDonald, 1999)</b>	<b>MSSC (Trail &amp; James, 2001)</b>
Aesthetics	Aesthetics	Aesthetics
Drama	Risk Taking	Drama
Economics	Achievement	Achievement
Entertainment	Competition	Acquisition of knowledge
Escape	Self-actualisation	Escape
Family	Skill mastery	Family
Group Affiliation	Social facilitation	Social Interaction
Self-Esteem	Self-esteem	Physical Skill
	Stress reduction	Physical attraction
	Aggression	

Table 3.1: Spectator motivations outlined by SFMS (Wann, 1995), MSC (Milne and McDonald, 1999) and MSSC (Trail and James, 2001)

Smith and Stewart (2007) reduced this mainstream literature on consumption motivations down to three core dimensions: psychological, socio-cultural and social well-being. The first two groups of motives refer to what attracts an individual; whereas the final group of motives relates to what makes an individual identify with a team. Strong fan identification is seen as a key pre-cursor to fan loyalty (Smith & Stewart,

2007). As the model refines fan-consumption motivations in a coherent, clear and concise manner, it is seen as the ideal tool for demystifying the loyalty of the football fan. For these reasons, it will be used for the purposes of this paper.

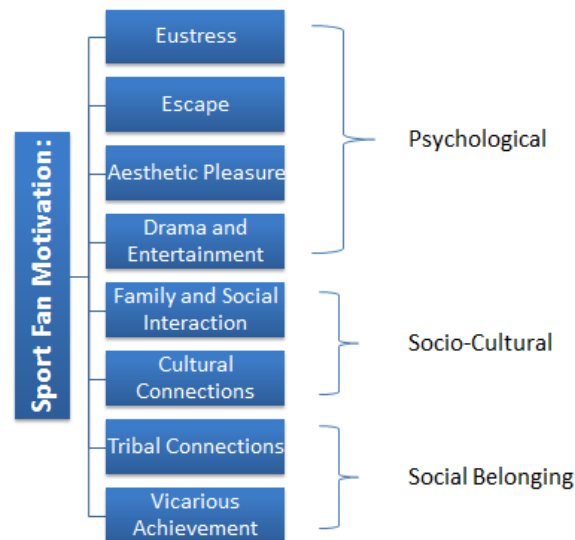


Figure 3.1: Smith and Stewart's (2007) refined model of fan motivation

### 3.2.2 Psychological Motives

Factors that relate to an individual's interest and enjoyment, as the product of an activity, can be defined as psychological motives (Wann et al., 1999). The fulfilment of numerous intellectual and emotional needs are often sought after by fans through their consumption of sport (Wann et al., 1999). They are enabled to experience positive thought states and feelings through this drive towards aesthetic pleasure, stimulation, escape and stress release.

#### 3.2.2.1 Eustress

The motive of eustress has been defined as a pleasurable stress or psychological arousal resulting from an uncertain outcome (Wann, 1995; Smith & Stewart, 2007). In experiencing wholesome happiness, pleasure is a major component, which links to satisfaction and meaning in life (Grimm, Kemp & Jose, 2015; Van Zyl & Rothmann, 2014). Because of the thrill of victory, as reported by Gantz (1981), fans view sport. The increased arousal and excitement experienced during viewing provides them with enjoyment. Fans have routinely described the sports-viewing process as arousing (Wann et al., 2001) and exciting (Krohn et al., 1998).

According to Trail and James (2001); whilst watching a closely contested match, eustress is the motive that keeps people fascinated. Sport plays a cathartic role; since it allows for shouting and bodily contact, as a means of venting aggression in what is considered a socially acceptable manner (Sloan, 1989). Sporting experiences are accompanied by conditions of excitement and anxiety. These emotions, in turn, stimulate and energise the fans (Wann et al., 1999). Emotional states such as these allow for adrenalin to be produced as the body is stimulated by its physiological systems. In addition, so too do they allow for the production by the brain of a neuro-chemical linked with pleasure, called dopamine (Smith, 2006).

On the most basic level, the positive stimulation of one's senses, which is vital for maintaining mental health, is experienced when watching sports (Wann et al., 2002). Contrawise, in many people's daily routines, they experience chronic under-stimulation (Krohn et al., 1998). Therefore, at its most complex, watching sports and the stimulation that this produces, allows people to leave behind the concerns of their everyday lives (Smith & Stewart, 2007).

In one of the few studies in which the uncertainty and suspense about a game's outcome affects enjoyment, it was found that unscripted sports showed higher levels of enjoyment and suspense (Depalma & Raney, 2003). In addition, men have generally been reported to be more motivated by eustress than women (Wann et al., 1999). Interestingly enough, viewing team sports was found to be positively correlated with the eustress motivation, according to Wann et al. (1999). Therefore, as football is an unscripted team sport, it is possible for eustress to play a role in the motivation of the fan.

Moreover, it is plausible that fans may be attracted to supporting the team because they enjoy the increased arousal they receive from the viewing process, more than any other activity they could possibly do instead. Contrawise, others may not find supporting Cape Town City FC as an attractive proposition; as they may find the viewing process does not provide them with enough enjoyment. In this case, other teams or other activities may be viewed as better options in the eyes of such individuals.

### 3.2.2.2 Escape

Everyday life is highly organised; while at the same time, the society in which one lives is not exciting (Elias & Dunning, 1970). Viewers regularly tune into sports to escape the stress of their daily lives (Wann 1995; Smith, 1998). The arousal and stimulation that watching sports provides acts as a corrective measure to this routine of ordinariness (Elias & Dunning, 1970). Experiences of life satisfaction are provided by the emotional and psychological detachment from current life that sport consumption provides (Branscombe & Wann, 1991; Sonnentag, 2012). The attraction to a person-to-person sport, such as football, is therefore strong to those people longing for an escape from their highly regulated and routine lives into a world bursting with passion, ambiguity and spontaneity (Smith & Stewart, 2007). It has been argued that the ultimate escape experience is provided for fans by watching sport (Fink et al., 2002). While sport can be used to capture a heightened level of arousal for those fans increasingly worn out by their 'dull' lives; it can equally be used by other fans, who need to escape from their stressful lives (Smith & Stewart, 2007). For example, a study conducted by Bilyeu and Wann (2002) found that in comparison to European sports fans, African-American fans used sport as a means of escaping into a space that is more calm than their daily lives.

The study suggests that as these fans are a minority group, they experience more stress symptoms in their daily lives. While it is true that mood fluctuations may occur during the viewing of a game, the nature of the pain experience pales in comparison with the wearisome existence (Smith, 1998).

Finally, the escape motivation can also be driven by boredom. That is, in attempting to break free of a repetitive job schedule, viewers often support their team and view a game (Krohn et al., 1998). It has been conveyed by one study, which from the fans who reported to regularly tune into sports games, nearly two in five did so, in order to escape from boredom (Wann & Rochelle, 1999). In general, higher escape motivation has been found in individuals who prefer team sports, and in males more than females. The motivation has also naturally been found to be more prevalent during times of personal stress and problems. Thus, since football is a team sport, the idea of escape is likely to be an enticing factor to fans. With regard to Cape Town City FC fans, escape could play a major role in the attraction towards the team. As suggested, many of the

football-loving people stay in the areas of the Cape flats. Therefore, for those that may be struggling financially or otherwise, viewing Cape Town City FC matches can be seen as a fun escape. Additionally, for those individuals around Cape Town who are bored with their daily routine, Cape Town City FC matches can provide a nice change of scenery.

On the other hand, some individuals may not see going to a football match as a nice escape from a difficult life. They may see it as a pointless thing to do; as they have more important things to take care of. In addition, watching a football match may not be the desired activity to escape from boredom for some people. They may prefer to participate in other activities, such as going to the beach.

### 3.2.2.3 Aesthetic pleasure

The consumer's gratitude towards the mastery displayed by athletes is what can be referred to as Aesthetics (Boxill, 1985). Aesthetics is the motive that drives consumers to a sport – due to their appreciation for its artistic beauty. Aesthetic pleasure is offered to the fans through watching sports. One of sport's greatest attractions, for many fans, is that memorable incidents that remain in the collective memory are constantly provided by it (Kupfer, 1988). These memorable moments are when sheer beauty, virtuosity and drama are all realised (Kupfer, 1988). When describing aesthetic attraction, many viewers have highlighted the novelty and unexpectedness of play, along with the stylistic and artistic beauty found in sports movements (Zillmann et al., 1989). Viewers report higher aesthetic motivation for certain sports, which naturally contain more athletic elements than others, e.g. figure skating (Sargent, Zillmann, & Weaver, 1998). That being said, non-stylistic sports also receive appreciation for beauty and style (Wann & Wilson, 1999). Sports, such as football, have generally been enjoyed more by males than females, when it comes to aesthetics.

According to some studies, stylistic sports such as gymnastics are found to receive greater appreciation from the latter group. To be more specific, if a sport is perceived to be more active, dangerous and violent, males have been reported to have their enjoyment increased. Contrawise, violence and danger is off-putting for females, who enjoy more those sports that are perceived to be elegant (Sargent et al., 1998; Zillmann, 1995).



When taking Cape Town City FC fans into consideration, aesthetics could possibly play a prominent role in their loyalty. Cape Town City FC have developed a reputation for playing attractive football. Therefore, the fans may be attracted to the club because they see the way they play football as being beautiful and European-like. Contrawise, others may not be attracted to Cape Town City FC, for the very same reason that the brand of football does not resonate with them.

#### 3.2.2.4 Drama and entertainment

Entertainment, instant drama and intense enjoyment are provided through the watching of sport (Fink et al., 2002). Individuals form allegiances towards specific teams for various reasons. These include, but are not limited to, perceived mass popularity, team colours, geography, specific players, allegiances held by friends and family etc (Raney & Bryant, 2009). One of the most important motivational factors behind viewership, as a favoured team, follows an undetermined (yet hoped-for path to victory), is the accompaniment of enjoyment and satisfaction from team cheering (Raney & Bryant, 2009).

When watching an enthralling contest, fans become part and parcel of the theatrical experience, rather than statically embracing sensory delights (Smith & Stewart, 2007). Fans are able to capture a heightened experience of entertainment and drama through the combination of noise, high performance and drama, amongst other things (Crawford, 2004). However, entertainment for fans is not necessarily solely related to a match itself, or to the sporting arena. Sometimes, as a result of interaction taking place with other fans, this drama blossoms prior to the event itself (Smith & Stewart, 2007).

Gibson et al. (2003) pinpointed this concept through highlighting the importance of 'tailgating' in their study. They found that interaction takes place in fans' respective vehicles in car parks – hours before a game is scheduled to take place.

With reference to Cape Town City FC, the fans may be attracted to the club; because their games prove to be exciting and dramatic. These fans may enjoy being part of such an experience and interacting with others, who have experienced the same thing before and after the game. Additionally, they may be attracted to Cape Town City FC; because they simply dislike the other ABSA Premiership teams; and they

consequently hope that Cape Town City FC will beat them. Conversely, a lack of entertainment and drama during Cape Town City FC matches may drive some fans away from the club – in search of something that could serve their needs better.

### 3.2.3 Socio-Cultural Motives

Strong social dimensions have always been part and parcel of sport, ranging from talking about a team, watching a team, or playing for one (Wann et al., 1999).

#### 3.2.3.1 Family and social interaction

In similar vein to a vacation or weekend outing, sport is a vehicle for fulfilling family needs. This is because opportunities are provided for families to spend time together by sporting events (Smith & Stewart, 2007). In fact, frequently the nature of the game and the team playing are not important, when the motive of an individual behind attending an event is to experience a fun time with their family (Fink et al., 2002). Feelings of belonging are cemented by the drive towards building social relationships with 'like-minded' individuals (Fink et al., 2002).

The gravitation towards group affiliation, along with the need to identify with something bigger than oneself is reflected via the family, as well as by social-interaction motives (Wann et al., 1999). Relating to fans of Cape Town City FC, this would suggest that fans are attracted to the club because the games are an opportunity for a family outing after a long week of work. Members of a family can then come together and enjoy their day.

Specifically, with regard to interaction, sociability among sports strangers is increased due to the opportunity of sharing and trading useful information amongst themselves. One of the likeliest motivations for viewing sports is learning about teams and the players (Wenner & Gantz, 1998). Highlighted by several scholars, in general, fans take pride in being a walking expert on sports knowledge and a trivia encyclopaedia (Raney & Bryant, 2009). This is despite the fact that much learning is directed by one's favourite player(s) and team(s). Many fans watch to remain in step with their facts; as a plethora of statistical information regarding players and teams now forms part of the supporting experience (Raney & Bryant, 2009). As a universal language that arguably

transcends occupation, education and social status, sports allow fans to communicate with each other (Lever, 1983).

Interestingly enough, the opportunity for friendly disagreements with strangers and friends alike are welcomed in discussions. This is in stark contrast to political and religious speech (Karp & Yoels, 1990). Additionally, as a reason to follow and view teams, viewers have reported that the learning about sports themselves plays a predominant role. However, in comparison to the above-mentioned motives, this is to a lesser extent (Raney & Bryant, 2009).

The need to learn for social purposes has been more highly reported by non-sports fans and females. The desire to enjoy viewing with a loved one, as the result of increased knowledge, motivates individuals to learn such information (Raney & Bryant, 2009).

With reference to Cape Town City FC fans, this motive would suggest that supporting the club is an attractive proposition – merely because the knowledge gained from the viewing experience helps serve as an ice-breaker, when meeting strangers. In addition, it also helps facilitate a bonding process with a loved one, or with loved ones. For example, a husband or wife may be a football and Cape Town City FC fanatic; yet their spouse does not know much about the game or the team. Therefore, the spouse is attracted to Cape Town City FC and all that being a fan entails; just so that he/she can enjoy what his/her partner also enjoys.

### 3.2.3.2 Cultural Connections

Sport is used as a form of cultural celebration from fans. As such, a significant part of a fan's sporting experience comes in the form of symbols, icons and 'mythical images' (Segrave & Chu, 1996). This is perfectly illustrated by the importance placed on things, such as the passing of the Olympic torch and the lighting of the flame in the Olympic Games (MacAloon, 1981). When relating to clubs, this is further emphasized through aspects, such as team colours, theme songs, mottos etc., all of which signify shared humanity and common affiliations (MacAloon, 1981). Simply put, secular society can be given meaning through sport (Guttmann, 1986). In addition, it is possible for the ethnic and cultural heritage, along with national citizenship, to be transcended by the need to achieve cultural connections through sport.

In a study conducted by Bilyeu & Wann (2002), it was found that watching athletes with similarities to those of the viewer, in terms of demographics was greatly enjoyed. Similarly, Armstrong (2002) found that the presence of athletes and spectators from their own ethnic/racial group influenced African-American consumers desire to watch or attend a sporting event. She proposed that an event would be more desirable when it offers culturally relevant sport and entertainment.

Therefore, it can be argued that team identity, and consequently loyalty, will be strengthened if a team is perceived to successfully represent one or more external group identities (Heere & James, 2007). Several consequences are forthcoming from the relationship between group identity and loyalty (Jones, 2000). Fans would find it very difficult to change their commitment to a team; once that team is perceived to represent multiple external identities. The fan perceives the team as having multiple points of attraction (Heere & James, 2007). Moreover, the abandonment of a team under these circumstances may be looked upon negatively; as it would seem to suggest the abandonment of a significant external identity, for example, a nation (Heere & James, 2007).

With reference to Cape Town City FC fans, this could mean that they are attracted to the club, because of who plays for the club. As the club strives to be a “team for the city”, in their own words, and continues to sign young Cape Town talent, this may be attractive for people from Cape Town. Contrawise, even if the team aims to be one for the city, some people may not be attracted; when they don’t feel that sufficient racial entities are represented in the team. For example, their own race might be poorly represented.

#### 3.2.4 Social-Belonging Motives

The aforementioned psychological and socio-cultural motives help explain one’s attraction to a sports object. However, not all fans are attracted to the same degree, or with the same strength (Smith & Stewart, 2007). As it may be a predictor of their loyalty, the extent to which an individual identifies with a team is an important matter (Fink et al., 2002). Elements, such as commitment, attachment, satisfaction and involvement have been pinpointed as essential precursors of loyalty (Chen, 2007). Therefore, differentiating between social belonging and psychological motives

becomes useful; since the former describes the strength of identification; while the latter refers to attraction (Smith & Stewart, 2007).

Strong identification is likely to influence fans to attend games, increase spending on tickets, and maintain loyalty (Smith & Stewart, 2007). This is because sport is more deeply embedded in the self-concept of those fans who identify more strongly (Fink et al., 2002; Madrigal, 1995). Similarly, a strong connection to a team psychologically can result in loyalty, in which support transcends aspects, such as location (James et al., 2002 as cited in Smith & Stewart, 2007).

Fan identification has been suggested in previous studies as one of the motives for attending games (Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). Affective states, such as the enjoyment and satisfaction from watching an event, are shaped and exhibited by an individual's personal characteristics (Hung, Lee & Hou, 2011; Madrigal, 1995). For football clubs, fan identification is highly beneficial. When the team is successful, the level of identification and personal joy are positively correlated, according to Madrigal (1995).

Price sensitivity is reduced, as a result of high fan identification. Higher loyalty towards mediocre teams can even be displayed by highly identified fans (Madrigal, 1995). Finally, the chances of supporters distancing themselves from a team during unsuccessful periods is reduced – the higher the level of fan identification (Wann & Branscombe, 1990). Therefore, the impact on financial success of a football club, based on team performance, is minimised by high fan identification (Sutton et al, 1997).

From a social-identity theory perspective, researchers have predominantly looked at the fan-identification processes (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). An individual's personal identity and social identity make up his/her self-concept. Group affiliations with which one identifies constitute the social identity; while personal identity finds its roots in feelings, such as attractiveness and intelligence (Van Leeuwen et al., 2002).

#### 3.2.4.1 Personal Identity in Sports

Self-development and personal enhancement are provided with a medium through recreation activities (Kuentzel, 2000). The process, in which individuals seek for the

creation and maintenance of self-awareness in relation to the world around them, is contributed to by these activities (Haggard & Williams, 1992, cited in Ruehl, 2010). Individuals seek activities that allow behaviour, which confirms the self-image that they commit themselves to; since everyone commits to certain images of themselves (Ruehl, 2010). From another point of view, it can be argued that as a means of developing a desired self-image that isn't currently present, individuals take part in certain activities (Kuentzel, 2000).

A set of internalised roles and identities can be used to define an individual's sense of self (Hirt, Erickson & Kennedy, 1992). This concept can be applied to the sports consumer, where being a fan can be seen as the internalised role of the individual's sense of self. However, the degree of identification would dictate the importance of being a fan to an individual's sense of self (Ruehl, 2010). The fan role would be central to self-identity for the highly-identified fans; while it would be a peripheral part of identity for those who identify to a lesser degree (Wann et al., 2000).

An individual's social identity needs to be considered, in order to understand how sport-fan identification forms, and why that is the case. In addition, it is important to understand how the individual's self-concept is related to this identification (Van Leeuwen et al., 2002).

With reference to Cape Town City FC fans, personal identity would help explain why some individuals may remain loyal to the team. These individuals may see being a fan as part of their desired identity, which they want other people to know. In addition, they may do it because, for example, they are not currently seen as football fans; but they would like to be seen in that way; because that is how their friends are seen. Contrariwise, one's personal identity may also move an individual away from the club; in those cases, where these individuals don't want others to view them as being a fan. If that is the case, then it is easy to drop, or switch allegiances.

#### 3.2.4.2 Social Identity in Sports

As individuals can derive emotional significance from sports fandom, Madrigal (1995) sees this as a form of social identity. Based on the way individuals view themselves and are viewed by others, the social-identity theory describes the implications of group memberships (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). A set of individuals who believe themselves to

be part of the same social category, can be termed as a social group (Stets & Burke, 2000). This self-image can positively or negatively be influenced by membership in a social group.

Individuals tend to seek group memberships – with the hope of contributing to a positive social identity, which they hope to achieve (Tajfel, 1981). The maintenance of the psychological health of fans is assisted by these networks; as they create a sense of belonging (Gantz, 1981). In addition, they mitigate feelings, such as isolation, loneliness and anxiety (Wann, 2006). In this context, positive consequences to members can be gained through merely belonging to the favourable group. With fellow-group members, it is not even necessary to have personal relationships or direct social interaction (Tajfel, 1970).

In particular fan communities, sports fans can be viewed as group members (Ruehl, 2010). In the sports domain, if Tajfel's notion is applied, members are provided with positive consequences from fan communities. Again, this is regardless of whether or not any direct interaction takes place with other fans (Ruehl, 2010).

Furthermore, between colleagues and workmates, the association with a football club acts as a unifying subject, and a powerful topic of conversation (Parker & Stuart, 1997). If so, the positive correlation found between identification levels with a team and the well-being of a fan – in a study conducted by Wann (2006) – is not surprising. As a strong sense of community and intimacy is forged there, the stadium area is of particular interest (Melnick, 1993). Strong bonds are formed with other fans in this environment, or at least a strong sense of bonding (Branscombe & Wann, 1991). Within the fan community, this sense of bonding in due course leads to higher levels of identification amongst fans.

Social identity can go a long way in explaining loyalty levels, or the lack thereof. It may be easy for some fans to identify with the club; because supporting them gives them a sense of belonging and allows them to feel part of a community with other fans. That being said, for others, being part of a larger group may not be so pleasing; as they may associate negative connotations with fans in groups. For example, groups of fans are sometimes seen as being rowdy and violent.

Social-belonging motives are likely to play an imperative role in team identification, for whatever reason this may be (Fink et al., 2002). The more self-esteem an individual extracts from the success of their team, along with how closely they associate themselves with the team, the more committed and emotionally attached they will become (Smith & Stewart, 2007). In a similar fashion, an individual may see a group as an extension of themselves, as a result of their sense of belonging to a team, or group of fans (Smith & Stewart, 2007).

Fans want their sport to provide collective identity in some form, along with its inherent drama, excitement and symbolic significance (Morris, 1981). Sport experiences have often been associated with a sense of community and belonging. For instance, fans can connect with one another through shared interest in the game. They can also bond through how they express their allegiances to players, teams or clubs through watching and talking about sport (Melnick, 1993; Wann & Branscombe, 1993).

#### 3.2.4.3 Tribal Connections

In contemporary times, as argued by some, it can be said that ancient hunting patterns are reflected in sport (Morris, 1981). Members of various football codes are enabled to play out a variety of traditional roles, because of their strong tribal connections. For example, in sports clubs, the roles of president, referees, coaches and medical support staff can all consist of tribal elders. The sport's values and the regulation of participant behaviours are reinforced by the tribal rituals enacted by elders and players (Smith & Stewart, 2007). Things, such as the location of slogans, signs and billboards, along with other pre-game activities, constitute these rituals. Players on the field are lauded and cheered as they play – in line with their role as tribal heroes. Fans or followers accentuate rivalries through things, such as dress code and memorabilia; and they can thereby provoke the followers of other sporting tribes (Smith & Stewart, 2007). This is again in line with traditional tribal practices between one tribe and another, trying to get the upper hand, and bask in the glory of the rivals' failure (Smith & Stewart, 2007). Finally, much like tribal chants, fans create songs for their teams and players as a method of identity assertion. Additionally, it allows them to, before the start of the contest, declare their affiliations (Smith & Stewart, 2007).



The tribal nature of supporting the team may differ slightly from the literature on European football fans. For example, instead of singing at games, the fans of Cape Town City FC, and many fans around South Africa, blow Vuvuzelas. Regardless of the subtle differences, the core idea remains the same; and therefore, it is very possible that participation in such activities is seen as a point of attraction for some fans. However, at the same time, for other fans, this very behaviour may be off-putting. For example, some individuals may find the sound of Vuvuzelas to be annoying; and therefore, they would not enjoy viewing and supporting the club.

#### 3.2.4.4 Vicarious Achievement and Self-Esteem

When the team performs well, the sense of personal achievement that accompanies this is called vicarious achievement (Wu et al., 2012). With regard to previous literature on fan motivations, the self-esteem motive popularised by Wann (1995) bears a similarity to the vicarious-achievement motivation. The wish to maintain a positive self-concept through success of a sporting nature details this self-esteem motive. Additionally, the acquisition of knowledge expressed by Trail and James (2001) also shows some semblance with that of vicarious achievement.

In order to reflect the image that they themselves are successful, fans associate with a successful player or team (Smith & Stewart, 2007). There can be a significant variation in the depth and intensity of identification, however. On the one hand, supporters can be found, who tightly align their lifestyle and values around their favourite team, regardless of success or failure. On the other hand, some supporters directly link their identity with team success; and therefore, their attendance at games would decrease once the team's performance wanes (Sutton et al., 1997). A sense of empowerment and social status can be extracted from one's association with a successful team (Trail et al., 2000). Moreover, as mentioned, the viewership of sporting events provides individuals with the opportunity to increase their self-esteem (Wann, 1995; Wenner & Gantz, 1998). Watching a favoured team is said to increase one's confidence in one's own abilities and talents.

In a similar fashion, when witnessing a favoured team lose, or learning of things such as player scandals, self-confidence and esteem can be reduced significantly (Kahle et

al., 2001). This is because of how closely the individual sees the team, as an extension of themselves (Kahle et al., 2001).

In a study conducted on basketball teams, if their favoured team won, it was found that fans had higher estimations of their own ability to perform various tasks in comparison to the fans of the opposing team (Hirt, Zillmann, Erickson & Kennedy, 1992). Shifts in the current levels of self-esteem, rather than mood changes, were found to cause these differences. Madrigal (1995) and Owens and Byrant (1998) reported similar findings. Moreover, fans who identified with a team that proved to be successful, according to two seminal studies on the identification concept, were more likely to make their affiliation publicly known (Cialdini et al., 1976; Tajfel, 1981).

On the other hand, when their teams were underperforming, identification with a team, particularly in public discourse, was downplayed (Crocker & Major, 1989). In general, as with the eustress motivation, it has consistently been reported that the prevalence of self-esteem motivation is higher in males than females. Additionally, it has been found that the need for self-esteem as a motivation decreases as educational levels increase (Wann, 1995).

Vicarious achievement can play an imperative and underlying role, based on the success of the team. When the team is winning matches, trophies and generally doing well, individuals may want to associate with this success. Likewise, when the team isn't winning much and just struggling to survive, other individuals may feel the need to detach themselves from any association with the club.

In order to understand fan loyalty, motivations are vital. Fan loyalty will positively be influenced by stronger motivations. However, what is also clear, based on the research conducted on the driving factors behind fan behaviour, is that not all fans would be equally inspired by the same factors. Differences among the participants, based on gender, education, level of involvement etc. have been found by most studies. For instance, when it came to self-esteem, escape, eustress, and entertainment, male participants scored higher than female counterparts in a study conducted by Wann (1995). When it came to group affiliation, however, females were found to score higher than male participants. Also, older participants produced lower scores on group

affiliation. Wann et al. (1999) conducted a further study years later that found males report higher levels of aesthetics, eustress and self-esteem.

In addition, when it came to family needs, female subjects were reported to have higher levels than males. In the same study, individuals who reported higher levels of education, in comparison to those with lower levels, were found to desire the entertainment motive more. In a different study, but with similar results, greater scores on aesthetics, knowledge, family needs, and achievement were found in male subjects when compared to female ones (Trail et al., 2003). While both males and females were generally found to be drawn by the excitement motive, rather than the social motive, Mehus (2005) found that excitement was more important to males than females.

The hypothesised motives are therefore moderated by factors, such as gender, age and education (Madrigal, 2006).

Considering that when it comes to attraction, identification and loyalty, there are differences found between different groups of people, it does not make sense to analyse fans as a homogeneous group. Some nuance need to be added to the discussion. Therefore, the following section, based on the previous literature, segments fans into like-minded groups. This is firstly done, based on the levels of identification, and then secondly, on behaviour. The segmentation of fans into varying types makes it simpler for clubs to select their target market and aim their marketing efforts (Wiid & Cant, 2015).

### **3.3 Sports Fan Groups**

#### **3.3.1 Levels of Support**

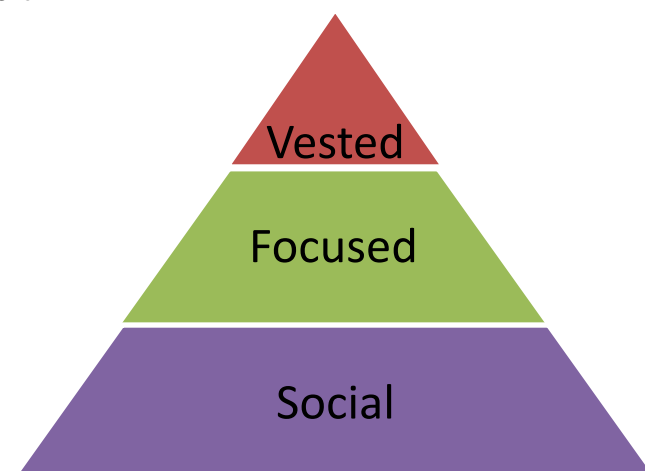


Figure 2.2: Sutton, McDonald, Milne and Cimperman's (1997) three levels of commitment and identification

With the main distinguishing criteria between fan groups being the level of identification to a team or athlete, fan grouping can be recognised. Three levels of commitment and identification, according to Sutton, McDonald, Milne and Cimperman (1997) exist. These are: social fans, focused fans and vested fans. The highest level of identification with a team or athlete is found in the last group.

The entertainment value of a sporting event is the primary concern of a social fan. This type of fan, more than the game itself, seems to enjoy the social interactions that take place prior to it and after it (Kwon, 2001). In terms of emotional and financial investment, these fans have a passive relationship with the team and exhibit little commitment (Sutton et al., 1997). Simply, opportunities for social interaction and any pleasurable and stress-relieving characteristics satisfy social fans (Sutton et al., 1997).

On the other hand, due to certain characteristics that they find appealing, focused fans have a stronger identification than social fans. However, if their team performs poorly, this group of fans is just as likely as the previous group to switch teams or retract their support (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). Finally, the strongest and most loyal group are the vested fans, who display high levels of emotional attachment. Because of their high identification level, their support and loyalty is most likely to lead them to attend games, to be more emotionally committed, and to buy team apparel (Wann & Branscombe, 1993).

What is clear is that the same enthusiasm, commitment and passion towards a team are not experienced by all types of fans; and the outcome from the sporting event helps to distinguish between them (Smith, 1988). That is, some remain loyal, regardless of the result of the team; while others disperse as soon as the team loses. Based on their motivation and fan-like behaviour (Agas et al, 2012), these three levels can be categorised into five types of fans.

### 3.3.2 Fan Typologies

Fans are the lifeblood of football (Bridgewater, 2010). Without them, not only would match attendance revenue, broadcast revenue and merchandise sales be non-existent; but also, there would be no value for corporate organisations, who sponsor teams (Bridgewater, 2010). With this acknowledged importance in the game, there has naturally been a conscious effort made to better understand them, in order to effectively meet their needs. The desire to understand these consumption patterns has resulted in the creation of numerous typologies that aim to reveal the motivations and behaviours of this perplexing group.

The literature on these consumption patterns has evolved in its extensiveness and sophistication. Multifaceted models grounded in solid theories of consumer behaviour have replaced rudimentary analysis that merely contrasted 'authentic' consumers with their opposite (Stewart, Smith and Nicholson, 2003). With the escalation of sport-consumption typologies, many studies have often got across the same point by using different terminology. On a positive note, this means the various types and segments propagated can be merged into a couple of core dimensions.

#### 3.3.2.1 Temporary Fan

For a temporary fan, being a fan is not essential for self-identification. The interest of this fan regarding the phenomenon is time-constrained. Therefore, the fan returns to normal behaviour once the phenomenon of interest is over, rather than continuing to exhibit behaviour related to the sports object (Samra & Wos, 2014). For example, if applied to Cape Town City FC, a temporary fan would watch a match and display the characteristics of someone who supports the team during the game. However, as soon as the game ends, the fan resumes his/her normal behaviour; and does not continue showing those qualities that would characterise a supporter; for example, they would not engage in a debate regarding the game that has just taken place. The temporary fan and other sports fans are primarily differentiated on the basis of this time boundary (Samra & Wos, 2014). Cialdini et al. (1976) suggest a theory that may explain the behaviour of such fans. They propose that the best way to describe such motives and behaviour is through a concept called 'basking in reflected glory' (BIRG).

This puts forward the idea that individuals like to be associated and internalise the success of others – even though they have not contributed to that success. Therefore, a temporary fan of Cape Town City FC would perhaps want to show that they are interested in and support the team, when the team is going through a successful patch.

#### 3.3.2.2 Devoted Fan

For the devoted fan, regardless of the ending of the event that captured their attention, or the fact that they are no longer in the geographical location where they consumed the product, they would remain loyal to their team or player (Samra & Wos, 2014). If an object (the football team in this case) is used to maintain a self-identification concept; then, according to Ball and Tasaki (1992), one is attached to that particular object. Therefore, if a consumer sees the object as part of their identity, their behaviour towards the object would be more protective. In addition, if the consumer spends a great deal of time and effort on maintaining the object, any form of deterioration or loss of the object would be difficult to accept emotionally (Ball & Tasaki, 1992).

This is the case with the devoted fan. They have a strong bond with the team that they support; and anything negative regarding the team has the ability to affect them in some way. If applied to Cape Town City FC, the devoted fan would continue to exhibit behaviour that would suggest they support the team, regardless of whether a match is going on or not (unlike the temporary fan). The devoted fan will stick with their team through thick and thin. However, the primary point of differentiation between this fan and the next one, is that even though being a fan plays an important part in their self-identification; it is not the be-all and the end-all of their self-definition (Samra & Wos, 2014).

#### 3.3.2.3 Fanatical Fan

The fanatical fan shows strong and intense levels of allegiance, passion, involvement, commitment, devotion, enthusiasm, and emotional attachment (Bristow & Sebastian 2001; Funk & James 2001; Oliver 1999; Redden & Steiener 2000; McAlexander et al., 2002). The fanatical fan, like the devoted fan, is not bounded by distance or time; and they use their attachment with the sport product to define themselves. Despite poor performance, this type of fan displays an intense love and loyalty towards the team (Hunt, Bristol & Bagshaw 1999; Whang et al., 2004). The fanatical fan sees their

identity as a fan, as a more important part of self-identification in comparison to the devoted fan.

They display behaviour that exceeds that of the devoted fan; they show superior knowledge, and when watching their team compete; they show greater levels of anxiety and arousal (Branscombe & Wann, 1991). Moreover, they highly value interaction with their club. For example, they are keen to subscribe to things, such as club newsletters; and their support remains consistent, while they resist any attempts made to reduce their attachment to their team (James, 1997).

If applied to Cape Town City FC, a fanatical fan would show the same level of support for the team, whether it is successful, or not. Moreover, when the team play matches in other cities around the county, this is the type of fan that would make the journey. On a separate note, but perhaps most importantly; they would view their role as a fan of Cape Town City FC as one of the most important parts of their self-identity.

In summary, a perplexing array of attitudes, behaviours and values are displayed by sports consumers (Meir, 2000). Not all of them are passionate and fanatical in equal measures; neither do all of them confirm their personal identity through the teams, which they support (Redden & Steiner, 2000). Nor are they all wholeheartedly loyal, immersed in club history, or resistant to acts that threaten to change traditional team values. Some fans regularly attend games; while others only bless special occasions with their presence. Some fans completely engross themselves in sport conversation; while others watch pay-per-view sports channels to display their fandom. Fans experience sport in varied and divergent ways; and they meet a wide range of needs through the use of team affiliations (Wann et al., 2001, cited in Stewart, Smith & Nicholson, 2003). Contrary to the early models that reserved fandom only to those who regularly attended games and openly showed a passionate attachment to their team, the term sports fan is a self-defining phenomenon. A fan is someone who says s/he is a fan.

Therefore, to describe the typical sport fan is impossible; as there are numerous interdependent behaviours, attitudes and values that need to be taken into consideration (Stewart, Smith, & Nicholson, 2003).

However, for the marketers of sports clubs who are looking to increase gate receipts and boost team revenues, understanding and accommodating the different consumer motivations can be a significant benefit (Samra & Wos, 2014). Particularly, if motivations that drive a spectator to consume the sport can be understood, then marketing communications can subsequently be developed, based on these motivations. Often, these communications can help expand the group of fanatical fans; and they could thus receive greater revenue from a larger loyal customer base (Samra & Wos, 2014).

Based on all the above, it is safe to say that different factors motivate different people; and different people display their support in various ways. Naturally, it should be the goal of Cape Town City FC and other football clubs to expand the segment of their fan base that is considered to be loyal, as much as possible. In order to do so, it needs to be mentioned that the loyalty levels of fans are not stagnant; and they are susceptible to change. This change may be for the better, or for the worse; and therefore, is important to understand this issue, in order to be able to mitigate any factors that could cause a change for the worse. The following section elucidates the idea of developing fan loyalty.

### **3.4 The Development of Loyalty**

The loyalty levels of football fans can be compared to the loyalty levels of customers of other product sectors, according to a study conducted by Parker and Stuart (1997). In contrast to the other sectors, as pointed out by the authors, a phenomenal display of brand loyalty is shown by football fans when they stick to their team, regardless of success (Ruehl, 2010). However, professional football clubs cannot believe in the concept of undying loyalty amongst fans; since their importance in terms of revenue is too high to risk it (van Leeuwen et al., 2012). Furthermore, factors, such as perceptions of large player salaries, ticket prices, rule changes, hyper-commercialisation etc. make it possible for fanaticism to be reduced (Van Leeuwen et al., 2002).

Football clubs need to strive for the maintenance and improvement of the level of loyalty of their fans, in order to achieve sustainable financial success. Incorporating marketing techniques from other sectors can be used to address the risk of a decrease



in fan loyalty (Parker & Stuart, 1997). As fan loyalty does not merely develop overnight, marketers need to enhance their understanding of the formation process that facilitated the emotional attachment between a team and its fans (Ruehl, 2010).

Cognitive processes, in which psychological connections are formed, as suggested by James (2001), can result in this loyalty. During this road taken to fan loyalty, attachments are formed after the teams are actively compared and evaluated. Different factors, including the accessibility of games, the availability of viewership, and the social agents, such as friends and family all have the ability to influence the development of these psychological connections (Ruehl, 2010). James (2001) undertook an examination of such connections and cognitive development; and he found that from the age of 5, preferences can start developing. Generally, at this age, the introduction to a sports team is done by the father, who acts as the socialising agent with the highest influence (Ruehl, 2010).

However, at certain points and situations in the life of a fan, various socialising agents would have various influences. For example, according to Kolbe and James (2000), team loyalty for adults can be influenced more by community associations and peers.

Therefore, with the above-mentioned in mind, the loyalty levels of Cape Town City FC fans would be influenced by different factors and agents at different stages in their lives. The kids who are fans are likely to be influenced by their respective fathers. Similarly, the adult fans are likely to be influenced by other adults. As such, if the club has a family feel to it, the loyalty of kids would be more easily developed; as they can bond with their fathers over the team. Moreover, if the club gives off the feeling of being one big community, adults' loyalty would be more easily developed; since they tend to bond with their fellow adults within this community.

On the other hand, if the club is not surrounded by either of these 'feelings', it might prove difficult for some fans to progress with their loyalty, or even to maintain it. In such cases, it is possible for the fan to lose interest, and perhaps to show signs of disloyalty.

Accordingly, it is beneficial for Cape Town City FC and other football clubs to know how they can reflect a certain impression of the team, in order to stimulate the loyalty of their fans. Following this train of thought, the next section looks at the role of the

club's brand in the concept of loyalty. It explains how the image that the club brand holds in the minds of consumers can influence the loyalty levels towards the positive end of the spectrum.

### **3.5 Exploring the Role of Brands in Fan Loyalty**

In a sports context, elements such as service quality (Shilbury, 1994), perceived value (Siomkos et al., 2006) and brand image (Bauer et al., 2008) have all been researched as determinants of loyalty. It is acknowledged that these, along with others that may not have been mentioned, are important factors in the discussion. However, it is not within the scope of this dissertation to address all of these elements. Therefore, brand image will be used; as it has been found to contribute to both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2005).

#### **3.5.1 Brand Image**

Brand image and awareness are two components that make up brand equity. Because brand awareness is usually high, when it comes to professional clubs in popular sports, such as football, it makes more sense to focus on image rather than awareness (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008). In other words, for people who are already interested in a particular sport, it may be assumed that brand recognition and recall are already high. In addition, the opportunities to manage brand awareness are actively mitigated because media exposure is strongly influenced by the team's competitive success (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008). As they are complex brands with intangible and unpredictable core products, sports teams are even more strongly linked to their brand personalities than are other brands (Smith et al., 2006).

Brand image has the potential to represent the one constant in the respective minds of fans within a context that is shrouded in the said unpredictability of the product (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008). The possibility of a fan's purchase intention can be increased by this image (Santini, Ladeira & Araujo, 2013). This is because brands with distinctive and strong personalities are more easily identified with (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Consequently, a good brand image can improve the loyalty among fan bases (Fortunato, 2008). It builds distinct and favourable brand beliefs among both incumbent and potential fans.

During those times when the team succeeds in high-level competitions, the image tends to be more favourable. Likewise, during falls in performance, the image tends to be less favourable (Garcia, Pérez & Rodríguez, 2008, cited in Da Rosa Borges & Silva, 2014). Therefore, a unique opportunity is presented to marketers by brand image – to present a consistent and stable appearance of the club – during both successful and unsuccessful periods to the public and the fans alike (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008).

When it comes to the explanation of fans' attitudinal and behavioural brand loyalty to a football team, both emotional attachments and psychological dimensions have key roles to play. Firstly, Bauer et al. (2005) contend that it is imperative for management at clubs to care about the brand and to improve confidence and loyalty through the exploration of the fan base's emotional attachment (Holt, 1995). Fans display a much greater inclination to watch and attend games; because they are emotionally committed to the team and event (Mahony et al., 2000). In stark contrast to loyalty in other types of businesses, any objective reward does not dictate the loyalty of fans. As their interest in the brand is self-sustaining (Pimental and 2004), fans are unique consumers. That is, behaviours that are beneficial to the brand-fan relationship, such as positive word-of-mouth, are voluntarily engaged by the respective fan (Chung, Farrelly, Beverland & Quester, 2005). Secondly, loyalty is also influenced by factors that contain a more psychological dimension. Examples of these dimensions are self-image, social and emotional identification, brand symbolism and habits and long history (Lin & Lin, 2008). Fans strive to consume brands that will boost their self-esteem; as each individual wants to portray the ideal image of themselves (Carlson et al., 2009).

Thus, when it comes to Cape Town City FC fans, it is possible for the brand image of the club to influence the loyalty levels. For example, if the image is good in the minds of the fans, then regardless of how well they do in any given season, the fans will remain loyal. However, if the image is not so good, and the fans don't really relate to or feel part of the team on a deeper level, then during unsuccessful periods, the loyalty levels may fall. As previously mentioned, the key is for Cape Town City FC to create a positive image of the team, in order to foster loyalty from the fans.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, it was found that fans are attracted towards a sports team, such as Cape Town City FC, due to various motivational reasons. These are inclusive of the psychological, socio-cultural and social well-being elements. Motivation was defined as the driving factor behind team support. This refers to, amongst other things; why individuals watch and attend games; why they buy merchandise; and why they stay loyal to the team that they support. It was highlighted that not all fans are motivated by the same things; nor do they all behave in the same way. Therefore, researchers have segmented fan bases into groups of like-minded individuals.

Finally, the idea of fan loyalty as being something dynamic, rather than stagnant, was emphasised. It was suggested that the club's brand plays an important role in ensuring that this loyalty moves towards the positive end of the spectrum.

The methodology of this study is presented in the subsequent chapter. It will define the case-study method; and it will explain why it is seen as the perfect fit for the purposes of this study. Following on from that chapter, Chapter 5, will present the results from the research taken place, as well as providing an analysis of what is shown. Finally, Chapter 6 will give some recommendations based on these results, while simultaneously pinpointing the various limitations of this study.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this chapter is on the methodology used, the data-measurement tool and the way the data were analysed during this study. The structure and precision of the methodology is clearly defined in relation to previous research literature to aid any potential duplication studies in the future. The research paradigm (section 4.2) marks the start of this chapter, where it is discussed what paradigm was most appropriate for this study's purpose. The research design follows (section 4.3). The target population of the study, along with the design of the samples used are subsequently detailed (section 4.3). Following on, the collection of data and the process behind it (section 4.4) are highlighted. Tying into that is the description of the method of analysing the data that was used (section 4.5).

A case-study research design was used to attend to the research questions and the objectives of this study. A qualitative method of data collection, informed by the chosen research paradigm, was executed; and this will be described in detail later on in the chapter. Sport marketing literature has made use of quantitative research methods in the past. However, in order to discuss sensitive topics, such as the reason for the loyalty, or the lack thereof amongst supporters, it was felt that there needs to be a high degree of trust and understanding between the participants and the researcher (Churchill, 1995).

This sort of trust was thought to be achievable through the use of qualitative methods. Finally, the chapter is wrapped up by the ethical considerations that guided the study (section 4.6) and a conclusion (section 4.7).

### **4.2 The Research Paradigm**

A paradigm is defined as the shared understandings of reality by Rossman and Rollis (2003). The Greek word *paradeigma*, defined as pattern, can be traced back as the origin of the term paradigm. The term was first used to signify a shared conceptual framework of community scientists, which allowed for the examination of problems and finding solutions from a convenient model (Kuhn, 1962). Creswell (2009) refers to it as a worldview.

According to (Neuman, 2011), the way to describe a paradigm is to refer to it as a whole system of thinking. In a particular discipline, a paradigm essentially refers to research traditions that have been established (Mouton, 1996). Collis and Hussey (2009) contend that a paradigm is a philosophical framework. It can be seen as a model for observation and for the understanding of a study (Creswell, 2007). It is inclusive of a body of research and methodologies, accepted theories, frames of reference, traditions etc. (Babbie, 2010; Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Thus, a researcher's action is guided by a basic set of beliefs, which together form the basis of a paradigm.

Essentially, some underlying philosophical assumptions serve as the base all research in any given study. This is in terms of what valid research comprises and the suitability of research methods – with the aim of knowledge development. Accordingly, knowing what these assumptions are is imperative, in order for any research to be conducted and evaluated. Four different paradigms are identified by Rossman and Rollis (2003). There are however, two primary ones: namely Positivism and Interpretivism.

#### 4.2.1 Positivism

Positivism is an approach that is difficult to precisely outline; because it is used in different ways (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A philosophical position that research can clearly identify is how some view the approach (Bryman & Bell, 2011). For others, it is seen as a way of describing often superficial data collection in a pejorative way (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The positivist approach consists of two important principles. Firstly, the causes of human behaviour need to be isolated, analysed and understood. Essentially, it is believed that if what initiated behaviour is understood, then human behaviour can be explained and predicted to an extent (Creswell, 2009).

Objectivity is the second principle. The only way of establishing objective reality and truth, according to positivism, is through a scientific method (Kawulich, 2012). All scientists, however, do not approve the positivist tradition. This is down to, firstly, that positivism believes that patterns and generalisations can be applied to the social sciences (Glicken, 2003). However, these generalisations (theories) are based on natural science laws (Scott & Usher, 2011); and therefore, they involve a number of assumptions. Secondly, one of the main gripes of the approach is that many early positivist social scientists came from the view that rationality always formed the basis

of human behaviour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Babbie (2010) contends that rationality does not always characterise human behaviour. He further proposes that to an extent, acting, thinking and interpretation of everything is done subjectively. This study could not entirely be aligned with the positivist approach; as its focus is not based on the natural sciences.

As an alternative perspective to positivism, interpretivism can be viewed as a collection of perspectives that are related to one another. 4.2.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism assumes that the objects of natural sciences and people contain inherent differences; and therefore the study of the two requires different approaches (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The subjective meaning of social action is grasped by the researcher during this approach (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Understanding the world in relation to the experiences of others comprises the interpretivist approach. The participants participate in the research in a natural setting, where they make their living. This approach differs from positivism, based on a number of things. These are, namely: What is the role of the researcher during the study? What is believed to be knowledge? And where do we obtain it from? Lastly, what is the nature of reality? Humans are continuously interpreting, giving meaning and rationalising daily actions – in an attempt to make sense of their world (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

With the intention of gaining understanding, interpretivism focuses on the exploration of complex social phenomena. Understanding the experiences of people, along with the value that people attach to these experiences together comprise the purpose of the research (Collis & Hussey, 2009), as seen by the interpretivists.

Thus, interpretivist research is of the view that reality is socially constructed (Creswell, 2003). Because the values and aims of the researcher and the perceptions of the participants shape social reality, interpretivists believe it is intersubjective and nuanced. Although some may be universal, what is true and untrue is thought to be dependent on culture, history, and the context. According to Gephart (1999), outside of the mind, meaning does not exist. Meanings are constructed from the mind's interpretations of events and experiences. Gephart (1999) contends that the research

principles from natural sciences should not be adopted in the social sciences. Willis (2007) agrees with this viewpoint, as do also Delport, Fouché and Schurink (2011).

A fundamental difference between the subject matter of the social sciences and that of the natural sciences forms a key point of the interpretivists' belief. As a consequence, and in order to appreciate social action's subjective meanings, a different methodology is required. The meanings that people give to their world should rather form the basis of their interpretation. Exclusive quantitative analysis cannot give this meaning; it can only be discovered through language (Schwandt, 2007).

This study aimed to understand the behaviour of the fans of Cape Town City FC, with a specific focus on the factors that would influence loyalty, or the lack thereof. The researcher had to be explorative; since little knowledge was known about the target population's behaviour. For this reason, this paradigm was considered to be most suitable; and it was used in this study. The research design is discussed in the next section.

### **4.3 The Research Design**

A research study is outlined by its research design (Malhotra, 2010). With regard to the initial research question, the research design helps one to arrive at conclusions through planning the acquisition of participants and the subsequent collection of the data from them (Welman & Kruger, 2001). Exploratory, descriptive and casual research designs make up the three different types of research designs that one can use. In order to gain a deeper understanding of a concept and to help solve a problem, an exploratory research design was conducted (McDaniel & Gates, 2007).

Therefore, as understanding the loyalty of Cape Town City FC, in particular, was the major focus of this study; and an exploratory case-study design was used.

#### **4.3.1 Case-Study Research Design**

An in-depth exploration of a program, an activity, a process, an event, or one or more individuals is defined as a case study (Creswell, 2003). Case studies attempt to find out more about a situation that is either poorly understood or somewhat unknown (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Therefore, this study used a case-study research design,



with the intention of gaining insight into what stimulates and what stifles loyalty amongst football fans; since this is a topic that is still under-researched in the South African context. The following paragraphs will provide further justification as to why the case-study research design was chosen.

One or more cases, which the researcher aims to study in-depth, are intensively analysed and detailed in the case-study research design (Stake, 1995). When it comes to business research, the design is popular and widely used (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Geographical location, such as an organisation or workplace, is associated with the case study in the most common use of the term. Other designs are separated from the case-study design through the focus of the latter's approach. In a case study, the principal aim is to establish an understanding of a bounded situation or system. The boundary is often blurred between the case's functioning parts and the context in which it operates, when it comes to case studies (Bryman & Bell, 2014). The anticipation of the opportunity to learn is what Stake (1995) proposed as the basis of which cases should be selected. Although the differences between them are often ambiguous, Stake (1995) distinguished between three different types of case study. It is useful to consider the distinction between two of these types. Firstly, intrinsic case studies refer to situations where, rather than attempting to gain insight into other cases or issues, the investigation is undertaken primarily to gain a better understanding of the particularities and peculiarities of a single situation, such as the fan base of Cape Town City FC (Hyett et al., 2014).

On the other hand, instrumental case studies are undertaken from the viewpoint that a deeper understanding of a broader issue is required, or that a challenge to current generalisations is called for (Hyett et al., 2014). The collective instrumental case method will not be defined; as it is not seen as useful for the purposes of this paper (Stake, 1995, 1998). This study adopts an instrumental case study approach as it aims to challenge the current generalisations made regarding undying loyalty amongst fans within the professional football industry.

### **Appropriate Uses of a Case-Study Approach**

A case study approach, according to Yin (2003), should be used when:

(a) Questions that need to be answered relate to “why” and “how”;

(b) The study is unable to manipulate or influence the behaviour of the participants in the study in any way or form.

(c) There needs to be a coverage of the phenomenon’s contextual conditions.

(d) There is a blurred line between the phenomenon that is studied and the context surrounding it.

Table 2: Appropriate Uses of a Case-Study Approach (Baxter and Jack, 2008)

In light of the table above, the aforementioned points (a) through to (d) were thought to apply to the study at hand. Accordingly, a case study approach was deemed to be correct.

A trademark of the case study design is the use of multiple data sources (Patton, 1990; Yin, 2003). Participant-observation, interviews, documentations, direct observations, archival records, and physical artefacts are a few of the data sources that are used. However, potential sources are not limited to this list (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In case-study research, which is unique in comparison to other qualitative approaches, quantitative survey data can be collected and integrated by the investigators (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Accordingly, the phenomenon being studied receives a holistic understanding – due to the facilitation of various sources, for which the case study makes allowance. The data that are obtained from various sources; since they are not analysed in silos. Instead, the analytical process involves the linking of the information gathered. The findings are strengthened through this convergence of the data; since a greater understanding of the case at hand is promoted (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

At the same time, however, there are dangers associated with gathering the data from various sources; even though this may look extremely attractive, because of the rigour associated with it (Baxter & Jack, 2008). For example, the amounts of data collected

can prove to be overwhelming; as they need to then be managed and analysed. Consequently, the data can sometimes make the researchers feel lost (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The case-study method in general can be attractive for numerous reasons. Firstly, in otherwise inaccessible situations, case studies permit investigation. Insight into phenomena can be given by case studies; because they are so rich in information. These insights would not be able to be obtained in any other way (Searle, 1999 cited in Hayes, 2000). Secondly, at times, extraordinary behaviour, which can stimulate new research, can be highlighted by a case study (Searle, 1999 cited in Hayes, 2000). Additionally, in relation to old research, established psychological theories can be contradicted by case studies. Accordingly, for a study such as this one, which requires in-depth insight and greater flexibility, case-study designs are useful (Searle, 1999, cited in Hayes, 2000).

Even though the design was seen as useful, consideration was still made to the disadvantages of case-study research designs. Firstly, the data found, due to their uniqueness, may only be valid for one case. This can be viewed as a weakness; as some types of reliability measures, such as external validity, are very low; because the findings cannot be replicated or generalised (Flyvbjerg, 2006). However, researchers of the case-study approach argue that to generalise beyond the case is not the purpose of the case study. Thus, when it comes to such studies, the criterion of external validity need not apply (Bryman & Bell, 2014).

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the fans of Cape Town City FC. This is in order to provide a foundation for the study of loyalty in the industry, as opposed to a rule applied to all fans across the spectrum. Therefore, generalisation is not the goal in mind; and the study has dealt with the challenge accordingly.

Secondly, the case study may be influenced by researcher bias. That is, the subjective feelings of the researcher may impact the collection and interpretation of the data in a certain way. This relates to both the data collection and the data interpretation (Thomas, 2011). Furthermore, information about past events and experiences may be severely distorted; since memory is heavily relied upon when reconstructing the case history. Unfortunately, memory is not always very accurate (Searle, 1999 cited in

Hayes, 2000). People may be unaware of other possible influences; because they tend to focus on factors, which they themselves find important. In addition, when it comes to various aspects of a person's life, very few people have full documentation (Searle, 1999 cited in Hayes, 2000). With this in mind, when reporting the findings of this study, care was taken.

In order to take due care and to enhance the overall study quality and trustworthiness, there are several elements that can be implemented (Baxter & Jack, 2008). A primary strategy that can be used to ensure this credibility is a triangulation of researchers, data sources or data types (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Data quality is enhanced in this way, based on the idea that the collection and comparison of data helps to confirm the findings (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1989). Researchers can also take advantage of a long experience within the context of the examined phenomenon. This is in order to establish a rapport with the participants. Consequently, socially desirable responses in the interviews can be reduced by the understanding of the multiple perspectives that are collected (Krefting, 1991).

Therefore, the study made its best attempts to ensure that the data obtained from the study were quality-driven. In order to do this, and as a method of triangulation, a three-step approach was undertaken. The data were not only obtained through fans via interviews, but also through tweets from fans online, as well as a member of the management of the club. In addition, over time, a rapport was built with the participants; and member checking was implemented.

## **4.4 The Research Philosophy**

### **4.4.1 Qualitative Research**

Five areas of research make up the qualitative approach. These are: phenomenological study, grounded theory study, ethnographic study, content analysis and case study (Leedy & Omrod, 2005). The previous section made mention of this being a case study. Conducting qualitative research is said to greatly benefit a case study (Bryman & Bell, 2014). As such, and starting with what qualitative research is, this section explains how the study applies qualitative research.

A comprehensive approach that involves discovery is often the definition given to qualitative research (Creswell, 2003). It comprises describing, explaining and interpreting the collected data (Williams, 2007). As it formulates and builds new theories, Leedy and Ormrod (2001) believe it is less-structured in description. From the perspectives of the local population that it involves, qualitative research seeks to understand a given topic or problem (Mack et al., 2005). If the aim is to obtain culture-specific information, qualitative research is especially effective. This is with regard to social contexts, values, behaviours and the opinions of populations (Mack et al., 2005). The information obtained from the study is culturally specific to Cape Town fans who support Cape Town City FC; and therefore, the qualitative approach was deemed to be the only appropriate and applicable method.

Qualitative research provides intricate details of how the issues of a given research study are experienced by people. This is one of its great strengths (Mack et al., 2005). Whereas quantitative research provides information of a numerical nature; qualitative research puts the “human” side of the issue at the forefront. That is, it reveals the relationships between individuals, along with the often-contradictory opinions, beliefs, emotions, and behaviours (Mack et al., 2005). Intangible factors, such as gender roles and social norms, amongst others, are effectively identified by qualitative methods. The role of these factors in the research issue at hand may not always be obvious (Mack et al., 2005).

#### 4.4.1.2 Advantages of Qualitative Research

The use of qualitative research is advantageous in the following ways. Firstly, both similar and diverse groups of people are allowed to be explored by it (Dudwick, Kuehnast, Jones and Woolcock, 2006). Secondly, a limited set of issues are not accompanied by the researcher; and as such, the participants get to raise issues that they view as most important within the inquiry (Yauch & Steudel, 2003). Thirdly, the respondents are empowered; because they are actively involved in the research process. Additionally, the interviewer and the interviewee are allowed to freely interact with one another. Accordingly, the data that are captured are relevant; because interviews make it easy to seek clarification. The elaboration of meanings by the participants during this approach makes it possible to gain in-depth and rich data on a matter (Lin, 2009). Simply put, discovery and description are maximised. Rather than

in the words of the researcher, interviews allow for access to the thoughts, ideas and memories of the interviewees in their own words (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000). Finally, qualitative research is a method that highlights the complexity of the experiences that participants have within their setting; and it does justice to the meaning that these participants put on these experiences (Atieno, 2009).

#### 4.4.1.3 Disadvantages of Qualitative Research

To begin with, even though it is not impossible, for various reasons, the replication of qualitative findings proves to be difficult (Bryman & Bell, 2014). Because the data found in qualitative research are not put under tests of statistical significance, the wider population cannot be generalised by the findings, as much as they can be in quantitative analysis (Leung, 2015). However, rather than to generalise about a population, from a qualitative perspective, the findings are aimed to develop theory through generalisation. Simply put, when considering the generalisability of the findings of qualitative research, rather than statistical criteria, the focus is on the quality of the theoretical inferences (Bryman & Bell, 20014).

Secondly, subjectivity is often an area pinpointed by critics of the qualitative method as a weakness. The researcher's often personal relationships developed with the respondents, along with his/her unsystematic views of what is of importance and what is not. These views are often too heavily relied upon by qualitative findings (Bryman & Bell, 2014). Furthermore, since a different day with different people could quite possibly achieve different results; it is, therefore, not uncommon to see accusations of unreliability in relation to the method (Brink, 1999). Consequently, context and topic can influence the attitude of the participants towards aspects of the study in qualitative research.

Accordingly, aspects of quality, accuracy and relevancy were considered in this study. At a further point in this chapter, a detailed explanation of the ways in which quality information was obtained can be found.

The qualitative approach to the case study was confirmed by a number of factors. The concept of loyalty, especially amongst sports fans, was thought to be a sensitive topic. As such, between the researcher and the respondent, it was felt that the best approach would need to include the establishment of trust and understanding. In cases like this,

as argued by Churchill (1995), the shift to a qualitative approach can be useful. In addition, as the preliminary insights into the study revealed a myriad of perspectives on fan behaviour; using only objective methodologies would have proved to be very difficult.

## **4.5 Target Population and Sample**

### **4.5.1 Target Population**

In order to solve marketing research problems, the first port of call is to choose a group of people that should be examined, i.e. the target population (Shiu et al., 2009). The target population are those people to whom the research applies (Kitchenham & Pfleeger, 2002). In other words, the researcher poses certain questions. These questions then need to be answered by those who are seen to be in the best position to do so – from both a knowledge and experiential perspective. These said groups are considered to be the target population. Preferably, the representation of a target population should be a members' list that is limited in number (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007).

Cost effectiveness and the fact that it is more timeous; are the two main benefits of extracting a minor sample. This is because it saves the researcher from having to study the whole population. Moreover, implications can still be drawn from the data obtained through the research (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007).

With the above-mentioned in mind, along with the understanding that to get valid findings, the collection of the data from the whole community is not needed, this study outlined a target population. The target population of this paper comprises the fans of the Cape Town City FC group, aged 18+ years old. As previously mentioned, the study undertook a three-step approach, inclusive of tweets from fans, an interview with a member of management of Cape Town City FC and face-to-face interviews with selected fans.

To obtain tweets, a search of "Cape Town City FC" was done on Twitter to gauge fan opinions on the online platform. All tweets that were relevant to the study at hand were saved. These related to issues such as brand image and club loyalty. These tweets can be found in Appendix B at the end of this document. The contents of the tweets were then juxtaposed with the information received from the face-to-face interviews

with fans. This was done so as to ascertain whether the online opinion of fans generally followed the data of the face-to-face interviews or contradicted it.

In terms of the interview with the member of management at Cape Town City FC, he was targeted on the basis that he directly deals with the supporters' groups that this study deals with. Therefore, it was felt appropriate to interview him in order to determine whether the views of club matched the views of the fans with regards to the issues being examined. This interview was conducted face to face, similar to interviews with the fans. This study's sample design for the fan interviews is as follows.

#### 4.5.2 Sample Selection

This study has a sample size consisting of 21 fans of Cape Town City FC, listed as members of the Cape Town City FC supporters' groups. The 21 participants are divided into three categories containing 7 participants each, based on the fan types described in Chapter 3. The study initially aimed to interview 30 participants, 10 participants per category, but the data reached a saturation point before this was achieved. To ensure that, in terms of the sampling frame, inappropriate individuals are not included, it is suggested that the participants should be screened (Malhotra, 2010). The concepts of behavioural loyalty and attitudinal loyalty were used as the basis on which the participants were screened.

Various factors were considered when selecting the sample size. These include both money and time. Therefore, a compromise between the need for precision and time and cost constraints invariably came to the fore when the decision was made. Contrary to what might be expected, the importance of the absolute size of the sample is greater than the relative size. Where analysis of the study would not require analysis in a sophisticated manner, a sample size that is small was considered suitable. As this study falls into this category, the sample size of 21 was considered adequate. Convenience sampling, as used in this study, is detailed in the section below.

#### 4.5.3 Technique Used for Sampling

There are two types of sampling methods, according to Bradley (2013), that are available for researchers' use. These are, non-probability and probability sampling; sometimes also referred to as non-random sampling and random sampling, respectively (Berndt & Petzer, 2011).



In qualitative research, random samples are not always justifiable or even necessary (Merriam, 1998). A non-random sampling technique was an attractive proposition for the study at hand. In non-random sampling, as argued by Leedy and Ormrod (2001), the representation of each element of the population is not possible. Quota, judgement, snowball, and convenience sampling comprise this technique of sampling. The collection of information from people within a population, who are available conveniently, is referred to as convenience sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). A convenience sample, in this case, was the most sensible to use by virtue of its accessibility. In a convenience sample, naturally formed groups are used by the investigator (Creswell, 2009).

Furthermore, when using this technique, a sample from which the most can be learned is chosen as the consequence of the assumption that the investigator wants to understand, discover and gain insight into (Baxter & Jack, 2008). As the supporter groups of Cape Town City FC are naturally formed; and they would have a wealth of knowledge about the club, these two criteria were thought to be met. Convenience sampling is seen as fairly acceptable to use in cases, where it provides the opportunity to gather data that can be seen as something that would be too good to miss. Due to the problem of generalisation, the data would not allow for definitive findings. However, a springboard could be provided for further research. Additionally, the forging of links can be allowed in the area of the existing findings.

## **4.6 The Data-Collection Instrument**

### **4.6.1 Pilot Study**

In preparation for the complete study, a pilot study is undertaken in the form of a trial run. The pilot study's aim is to contribute to the success of the research project as a whole – through providing insightful information about the study's proposed research method. Research instruments, such as the interview guide can be pre-tested during this study (Baker, 1994, pp. 182-183). Pilot studies are valuable because flaws in measurement procedures can be detected. Unclear or ambiguous items within the interview guide can also be identified. Additionally, important information about content or any discomfort on the part of the participant can be picked up by the non-verbal cues of those who participate in the pilot study.

It is useful to conduct a pilot study before the final research instrument is constructed. This is done, in order to make sure that the information being obtained is actually what is needed. The weaknesses in a proposed study can be highlighted in advance through conducting a pilot study. These are inclusive of whether the methods and instruments are appropriate and easily comprehensible.

In preparation for the predominant source of data collection in this paper, being the fan interviews, this pilot study included three participants, one to represent each of the three types of fans detailed in Chapter 3. The interviews were recorded using the researcher's mobile phone and were later transcribed on a laptop using Microsoft Word. The large-scale test was inclusive of 21 participants. The interview guide for both tests were found to be similar.

#### 4.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews and their Application in this Study

Qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews, are often favoured by advocates of the case-study design. This is due to the fact that an intensive and detailed examination of the case is generated by these methods (Knights & McCabe, 1997). There can be a convergence of various qualitative methods, when using a case study. Accordingly, one single approach does not need to be heavily relied on (Knights & McCabe, 1997).

To collect the data, several types of interviews can be implemented. These range from informal to highly structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were applied to this study. They are detailed in the section below. This is followed by their various strengths and weaknesses, along with their application in relation to the research studies.

In qualitative investigations, Merriam (1998) advocated interviewing to be less structured and more open-minded. Given its qualitative nature, unstructured interviewing, according to Denzin & Lincoln (2005), can provide greater breadth than other types of interviews. For this case study, an interview guide was used; and the format was semi-structured. When it comes to qualitative research, semi-structured interviews are often the sole data source (Adams et al., 2002). They are generally scheduled at a specific time and place outside the participants' daily lives. Pre-determined open-ended questions form the bulk of the interview. As the interview progresses, the dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee result in other

questions emerging (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Thus, semi-structured interviews were implemented, for both the fans and member of management at Cape Town City FC, in order to make provision for the interviewer to react to a given situation and to respond to emerging new ideas on the subject (Merriam, 1998).

The interest in face-to-face semi-structured interviews, according to Flick (1998), is the result of the expectation that true viewpoints are more likely to be revealed face-to-face, as opposed to a questionnaire in which the interviewer would not be present. These relate to how the world is perceived by the interviewees and how they rationalise the important events that happen in their respective lives (Flick, 1998). The interest in this approach is also influenced by the nature of the research problem. That is, the concept loyalty is as much about attitudes; as it is about behaviours. Therefore, due to the intricate details provided by a qualitative approach, interview methods were preferred to quantitative methods.

Moreover, it is important to note that sport revolves around human interaction and participation. As such, interviews are an essential source of a case study, due to the fact that they are usually about human affairs. The reporting of these human affairs through the eyes of well-informed respondents allows for imperative insights to be provided on a given situation (Yin, 2003).

The application of semi-structured interviews is now given in the following paragraphs, having completed the reasoning behind the use of semi-structured interviews in this study.

For the fan interviews, the participants in this study were interviewed on a one-on-one basis by the researcher. This was done purposefully to ensure that the participants were at ease in their setting, when answering the given questions. Had the interviews taken place in groups, there is a possibility of social pressures influencing the participants to answer in certain ways; and this risk was therefore mitigated by the method chosen (Malhotra, 2010).

Previous literature on qualitative research, case studies and semi-structured interviews was thoroughly reviewed before collecting the findings. This was done, in order to apply any of the suggestions that arose, in order to obtain quality-driven findings. An overall theme that was found was that in order for findings to be as

accurate as possibly, each person interviewed would need to be exposed to the same interviewing process. In cases where this is not possible, a close-as-possible process is highly recommended (Gavin, 2008). Accordingly, a uniform manner was carried out by the researcher himself to collect the data from the participants.

Between the 15<sup>th</sup> of March and the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, the interviews were conducted with participants in face-to-face interviews. On average, an interview lasted between 15-20 minutes. After the selection of the participants and their approach, each of them was informed of the following: (1) What the interview is aiming to investigate. (2) That no personal information of theirs would be obtained; and therefore, they could not be identified. (3) The anonymity of their responses would be guaranteed. (4) The interview would take around 15 minutes of their time. (5) Their participation in the study was completely voluntary; and they could remove themselves from it at any given point. No incentives were given to the participants to participate in the study; and once they had agreed to participate in it, their written consent was obtained.

Two steps were followed in the interview process. Firstly, a short five-question questionnaire was filled out by each participant. This acted as a screening to separate fans into groups. It allowed for a comparison between highly identified fans and those who were less identified. Following the screening process, the participants were then asked questions regarding their loyalty to Cape Town City FC through the help of an interview guide. Both the screening questionnaire and the interview guide can be found in Appendix A at the end of this document. Johnston (2004) used a similar approach of screening the participants before conducting his research. In total, 21 participants were interviewed. The initial aim was to interview 30; but the responses started becoming very similar at a certain point; and there 21 was deemed enough.

The transcripts of the semi-structured interviews were typed out on a laptop after they were recorded using a mobile phone. Even though it is sometimes a cause of dispute among the researcher and the participant of the study, the recording of the interviews is seen as appropriate, in order to capture the data more effectively. Key points can be missed by the researcher if he/she writes hand-written notes; while the interview is ongoing; and therefore, this might prove to be unreliable at times (Jamshed, 2014). The content of the interview, if it is being recorded, can more easily be focused on by

the researcher and the interview's transcript can be produced at a later point (Jamshed, 2014).

Finally, the data collected from the above-mentioned fan interviews were triangulated, as information was also obtained through the club's management and fan tweets from Twitter. Like the fan interviews, the interview with the member of management was also on a one on one basis with the researcher. It was held at the office of Cape Town City FC, devoid of any distractions or external influences. The session followed an interview guide which can be found in Appendix A as well.

As previously mentioned, the process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning is defined as triangulation (Stake, 2005). This is done, in order to verify an interpretation or an observation (Stake, 2005). Therefore, as the perspectives of both the fans and the management of the club were taken into consideration, the study made its best attempt to verify any information obtained through the research.

The advantages and disadvantages of the semi-structured interviews are detailed below.

#### 4.6.2.1 Advantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

Flexibility is one of the biggest strengths of semi-structured interviews. This is because the participants have a lot of freedom with how they can respond, even though specific topics and a list of questions are provided by the researcher (Bryman, 2004). As such, there is the possibility of underlying responses being investigated and responses being modified, when using face-to-face interviews (Robinson, 2002).

Through the exploration of experiences that people have had, interviews are an exceptional way of gaining insight into social matters (Seidman, 2012). The interviewer can better understand the message being given by the participant through the use of their non-verbal cues, which would not have been available in other forms of data collection (Robson, 2011). Therefore, occurrences of the real world are given valuable contextual information through the use of interviews (Denzin, 2001).

#### 4.6.2.2 Disadvantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

This method's weaknesses are important to recognise and address, however. Firstly, because a long process needs to be carried out, inclusive of initial contact, conducting and transcribing the interview, it is agreed that this method is very time-consuming (Robson, 2011; Seidman, 2012). Secondly, there is an effect that the interviewer can have on the participant of the study. Depending on how the interviewer is perceived, the participant can respond differently to the research (Denscombe, 2007). The amount of information that participants are comfortable to divulge can be influenced by aspects, such as ethnic origins, age, and the sex of the interviewer of the research. The nature of the topics being discussed has a big bearing on this; and whether this is a problem or not, is very dependent on it (Denscombe, 2007). Therefore, to put the interviewee at ease, it is suggested to make the reason and the purpose of the interview clear right from the word go. This is what was done in the current study.

Thirdly, a common threat to the validity of an interview of this kind is through the manner in which the questions are framed. If the researcher places his impressions of what would be worth discussing and what would not be in the form of questions, then their validity can be threatened. As such, it is safe to say that the extent to which the participants' opinions are actually and adequately represented determines the validity of the interview (Punch, 2001).

It is not easy for challenges to the validity to be avoided, due to the fact that face-to-face interviews are 'live' by nature (Newton, 2010). That being said, the risks are worth taking because of the richness and depth of the data that can be obtained by this very same complexity and vulnerability (Newton, 2010).

Overall, while considering both the advantages and the disadvantages of the method, semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study because of the need of the interviewer to probe the interviewee with regard to the concept of loyalty.

The following section will describe the data-analysis process.

#### **4.7 The Data Analysis**

In order to conduct qualitative interviews, many methods can be used. For the analysis of the data in qualitative research, the role of software in assisting the researcher has become increasingly important (Sotiriadou, Brouwers & Le, 2014). In recent times, published works have more frequently mentioned the use of qualitative tools (Jones & Diment, 2010). A commonly used software package has been a programme called NVivo (Jones & Diment, 2010). NVivo 11 was used to assist in the analytical process of this study.

A thematic analysis was conducted; and among the data collected from all three steps undertaken, themes were identified, analysed and reported on. A thematic analysis is a technique used in the examination of qualitative content to analyse highlight any themes from the text of data (Forman & Damschroder, 2008). NVivo 11 helps organise the data; however, the researcher is able to code the data and to develop themes on their own. In this way, there is a more meaningful engagement on the part of the researcher in the analytical process (Sotiriadou, Brouwers and Le, 2014). Chapter 6 discusses the insights obtained from the thematic analysis. The three objectives of the study were taken care of through the measurement instrument used.

#### **4.8 Trustworthiness of the Research Instrument**

In all research, the two aspects of validity and reliability are key. For findings to be credible and trustworthy, the difference between good research and poor research can be accounted for by meticulous attention to these two aspects. In qualitative studies, where the subjectivity of the researcher can easily govern the interpretation of the data, this is particularly vital (Brink, 1993). Therefore, the trustworthiness of the research instrument was determined by its validity and reliability. As a consequence of the pilot study carried out, the instrument was considered as reliable.

#### **4.9 Elimination of Bias**

This study attempted to eliminate bias from both the participants of the study and the researcher himself.

In terms of the participants, they were not incentivised in any way to participate in the study; and they did so purely on their own accord. In addition, their anonymity was guaranteed. These measures were implemented to ensure that the responses of the participants were as unbiased as possible; since they had nothing to gain or lose by participating in the study.

When it comes to the researcher, having spent a long period of time studying the literature of the topic at hand, it was possible for some sort of bias to occur. At the very least, in-depth analysis of the topic could have meant that the researcher had some preconceived notions about the loyalty of the Cape Town City FC fans. In order to prevent this from influencing the data and the conclusions deduced from them, the questions and answers were reviewed by a peer who had little knowledge of the study. Additionally, the responses were triangulated through information gathered on the social media network, Twitter, and a member of management from Cape Town City FC.

#### **4.10 Limitations of the Study**

To begin with, the research was conducted over a period of several months in one football season. This meant that the data collected were limited to a certain extent.

Secondly, the participants selected for the study were restricted to those who were a part of various supporters' sample. This was inclusive of the fans purely from supporters' groups. This could perhaps cause similar responses. In addition, the findings from these participants, because they were anchored in the conditions found in Cape Town, meant that the results cannot be generalised to other audiences. For example, football fans in Johannesburg, Durban or Port Elizabeth could experience vastly different factors that could influence their loyalties in certain ways.

Finally, a limitation was that many of the studies of this kind were conducted, using quantitative methods; whereas this one used a qualitative approach. To the best of the knowledge of this researcher, there have not been any qualitative studies on this topic in the South African context. Therefore, from a methodological point of view, it was difficult to find a bench mark or compare the results with those of similar studies. In addition, the concept of loyalty was predominantly determined by how the participants felt about the matter. The question of loyalty can be seen as a sensitive topic; and



subjectivity could dictate many of the answers. Accordingly, it is possible to question their validity.

#### **4.11 Ethical Considerations**

When the purpose of the study is kept away from the participants of it, qualitative research can be unethically applied. As such, the following paragraphs address the way this study considered how ethical research should be applied.

In order for qualitative research to be ethically applied, various conditions generally need to be met. These are, but not limited to, the following (Bryman, 2012): (1) The demands made on the participants by the researcher should not be unreasonable. (2) Participation in the study is purely reliant on the consent of the participant. (3) Participation should solely be the choice of the participant. They should not be put under any pressure, threatened or tricked into participating in the study. (4) The researcher should respect the confidentiality of the participant. Furthermore, the participant should remain anonymous for the purposes of the research.

With the above in mind, the study was clearly explained to the participants of the semi-structured interviews. The comforts of the participants were made a priority; and they were assured that their personal identity would be respected through the anonymity of their responses; and that their participation was entirely voluntary. Finally, they were promised that the findings of the paper would be used for research purposes only. The afore-mentioned points were considered to address all of the previously mentioned concerns.

#### **4.12 Conclusion**

The interpretivist paradigm using qualitative methods formed the basis on which this study was conducted. A sample of 21 Cape Town City FC fans obtained from various supporting groups were interviewed to gain valuable information on the research topic. In addition, the data collected from the sample was triangulated through the use of tweets from fans on Twitter and an interview with a member of management at Cape Town City FC. Bias was minimised to the best of the researcher's abilities; and the measurement instrument used was considered to have validity and reliability. Throughout the chapter, when considering appropriate

methodology, the various details considered along with how exactly the research was conducted have been highlighted.

## CHAPTER 5: THE FINDINGS

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, via the data-collection methods described in Chapter 4, the findings that were obtained will be presented and analysed. Reference to the relevant literature detailed in Chapters 2 and 3 will be given, during the analysis of these findings.

### 5.2 Thematic Analysis of the Data

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the measurement instrument used in this study was semi-structured interviews. This was conducted to investigate the factors influencing loyalty amongst fans. Data coding and formed nodes will be described below. Consequently, the themes that emerged will be presented. Under each theme highlighted, findings from the fan interviews, social media evidence and management interview are combined into the discussions.

#### 5.2.1 Coding of the Data

The following nodes were revealed via the analysis of the interviews. Themes then emerged from the relevant coded information. In relation to the research statement, the nodes that were revealed were as follows:

- *Understanding fans' perceptions on loyalty measures;*
- *The influence of European football;*
- *The effect of team performance and success;*
- *Factors that influence loyalty amongst the fans;*
- *The effect of brand image;*
- *Whether there were scenarios that could influence the switching of support.*

Themes of analysis were formed on the basis of these identified nodes. In order to answer the research statement, the themes are detailed below:

- *Understanding fans' perceptions on loyalty measures:* Having gone through the literature regarding fan loyalty, the intention was to gain some sort of understanding regarding what fans themselves thought of loyalty. The

researcher aimed to ascertain the meaning of loyalty in the minds of the football fans that were under study.

- *Influence of European football:* Here, the researcher aimed to determine whether the transnational broadcasting of European football played any sort of role in the behaviour of local fans.
- *The effect of team performance and success:* The researcher was interested to see what role, if any, performance and success played in the minds of the football fans.
- *Factors that influence loyalty amongst fans:* It was aimed to discover what factors participants could independently come up with regarding loyalty.
- *The effect of brand image:* The desire of the researcher here was to assess whether this factor played any role in the minds of the fans. If it did, the intention was to find out how influential it was in influencing behaviour.
- *Whether there were scenarios that could influence the switching of support:* Finally, the researcher's idea was to understand whether the target population could be influenced in any way to contradict what is conventionally thought to be true amongst fans – and to switch their support to another club.

The following sections describe the themes that emerged in greater detail.

#### 5.2.2 Understanding Fans' Perceptions on Loyalty Measures

21 participants were selected by the researcher to participate in the data-collection process. This was to gain their knowledge regarding fans' behaviour and the influences of loyalty or the lack thereof. The responses that were put forward by the participants were in general similar to those found and detailed in Chapters 2 and 3. The responses were more insightful than anticipated.

The formation of the theme was contributed to by question 8. Regarding the show of loyalty, the interviews brought varying responses. Participant 2 had the following to say:

*I think when it comes to a show of loyalty there isn't anything more important than pitching up for the match. The physical show of loyalty is important in my opinion. I do not think that there is anything more important than that, no.*

Participant 8 considered it to be the biggest indicator due to the experiences he has had while watching European football:

*For me, it is the biggest. When you think about European football, there are always sold out stadiums. Thousands and thousands of people coming to watch their favourite teams. Probably... err... just as many people wanting to watch the team but unable to get tickets to the match. When you characterize the loyal fan in that side of the world you always picture some crazy guy at the stadium draped in club apparel. Being at the stadium is a big thing. It is you showing this is your team. It's even more important when the team isn't playing well. Attendance when the team isn't playing well can't get more loyal.*

There was a consensus for this view to be true amongst the respondents. However, many of them added nuances. Participant 3 stated:

*Hmmm... errr... that's a tough question. I guess I would have to say yes... it's the most obvious show of loyalty I guess.... You know... being there physically to show your loyalty and support to the... to the team. So ya. I think that's a good one. Uhm... i also think a fan creating awareness of the team in their own communities is a big one too... I think that shows how deeply they are attached to the club... if they help spread the clubs brand... and want to get others involved... who I guess in turn would want to do the same ideally... then yeah... that... that would be a big show of loyalty... in my eyes.*

Participant 4 had a similar point of view with regard to fan engagement:

*I think it's the most obvious way through which you can measure the loyalty of your fans... Them actually using their money to come and watch the team play. I think it would be a fair assessment of their loyalty, yes. I don't know if it is the most important way to decipher loyalty. I don't know, it could be. But there are other ways. You know... there are different reasons behind small attendances. Loyal fans may want to attend but be unable to due to certain circumstances. So, I guess attendance alone isn't a very holistic assessment. But yes, I do see it as useful. I think another indicator of loyalty is communication with other fans. You know... strengthen the feeling amongst the fan base itself. I think that's a*

*good show of how much you care. Trying to take the support further and make it stronger.*

Pertaining to other indicators of loyalty, Participant 7 proclaimed:

*From my point of view, along with match attendance, clubs should gauge loyalty based on club apparel sold and their social media following. In this modern day, I think social media plays a big role. City seem to be doing a good job as they reached 50 thousand followers very quickly on Facebook. So, they look like they are on the right track. I suppose the next step is to change those who like your page online into a match attendance. But that will take time. The team is still a baby.*

Participant 19 felt:

*Supporting the club in whichever way you can, whether it be in match attending or watching on TV. As sometimes your circumstances don't allow you to buy a match ticket. If you can afford, buy their uniform to support the club financially.*

And Participant 20 stated:

*To me, buying/wearing clothing which identifies you as a Cape Town City Football Club fan shows your loyalty.*

In terms of the mentioned show of fandom on social-media platforms, participant 7 mentioned that this finding was in direct contrast to the view held by Participant 5:

*I think match attendance is very important. I would agree that is the most important actually. I can give you an example, the supporters club that I am part of, the Blue and Gold Army, we do not have a big following online. In fact, the other branches of supporters have a much bigger online presence. But... but on match day, our group brings the most fans to the stadium... compared to the other groups. If you were to measure loyalty based on online behaviour, then those groups would be more loyal. But in terms of physical attendance. We outshine everyone else. So, who would you consider more loyal, the ones who claim to be fans online for free or the ones who pay money to come and watch the team? I know what I think.* To this cohort, as suggested by the extracts provided, there is cognisance of different shows of loyalty. All the fans

acknowledged that match attendance was one of the ways to determine the loyalty of a fan. Many of them felt as if it was the best indicator. At the same time, however, there were a few who believed in other important indicators.

The cohort was identified as holding desires to be viewed as loyal. In some cases, a sense of competition with other fans in terms of loyalty was evident. One specific participant made mention of his supporting group's presence at matches in comparison with other groups, who were more present on online platforms.

The participants under study did not lack the knowledge about mitigating factors behind match attendance. Even in cases where the respondent was a frequent match go-er and believed attendance was the biggest indicator of loyalty, consideration was made of other fans' circumstances. Many respondents made mention of the fact that attending matches was not solely reliant on the desire of the fan; and that there could be many foreseen and unforeseen roadblocks along the way.

### 5.3.3 Influence of European Football

At least half of the participants stated that they followed European football concurrently with local football. Participant 1 had the following to say:

*Yes, I do support a European football team. I support Liverpool Football Club. But, I think local is lekker and so I would consider myself to have more allegiance towards Cape Town City in comparison to Liverpool.*

The idea of supporting a European team because of the number of years spent supporting them was quite common. Participant 5 claimed:

*I support Man United. I have done so for a very very long time. I grew up supporting them.*

Participant 11 had something similar to say about his support:

*Because I have supported Liverpool for 32 years.*

Participant 21 thought:

*I do like Liverpool. They are a much bigger club, they very popular and they have a good strong history. I am more loyal to them.*

And Participant 18 proclaimed:

*Real Madrid is the team I support. The team itself is more successful than any other team. They've won the Champions League cup 11 times in their football history. Also, the management of the team is more successful. The quality of the football players is what attracts me most. I would consider myself as more loyal to them.*

A few participants claimed not to watch any European football. Of which, participant 7 provided the most insightful response. Even though she didn't have any interest in watching the European game, she still kept herself updated through the use of the internet:

*I don't support any European team. I have never really supported a european team. I don't follow the game that side of the world. I read articles here and there but I don't watch many games. I'm more interested in our local product to be honest. I don't think this applies to me. I'm only loyal to Cape Town City and as I have said, its mainly because they play in a place where I stay.*

When asked if they were more loyal to a European football team in comparison to Cape Town City FC, most participants responded in the negative. Participant 4 felt that he was equally loyal to both Arsenal and Cape Town City FC. However, he gave his opinion on why he thought other fans might relate more to European football:

*Even though I would not consider myself to be more loyal to a European football team, I can I can see why other Cape Townians might. I think... I think the European football product is marketed very well. The game that they are playing is the same to the one that we are playing here. But the whole feeling around it... its very different. The Premier league for example, its advertised so well... and its made to seem very exciting... almost like a drama show. In that sense, it builds up fan anticipation and in the mind of fans its quality is increased. I think local football is behind in that sense. A lot more could be done in terms of marketing. I guess the fact that teams don't own their own stadiums doesn't*



*help though. Like Cape Town City plays their home games at Cape Town stadium. But if you drove past there you would never be able to tell that. There is no Cape Town City branding to be seen anywhere. So yeah. I think European clubs are visible... strongly visible on a global stage. Whereas right now, our South African clubs are barely visible even in our own country. I think that's the biggest difference. I think that's what makes supporters want to support European football instead. It's in their face... or at least that's my opinion.*

Participant 19 went on to suggest:

*I want to be more loyal to Cape Town City but I have been supporting man u since childhood so not yet. The club only opened up recently but the direction in which the club is going now, I see it happening, yes.*

The member of management at Cape Town City FC had this to say about the impact of European football on local fans:

*Often we have when the UEFA is on TV, we don't get a lot of people watching the games... it's actually very bad. But.. the.. the.. the.. the thing is errm if we communicated better would it still help ? I don't know. How much would it help? Would it help 2%? 1%? Coz.. Coz people are telling us well, the soccer needs to be improved. Err we want err more entertainment.*

The influence of European football on local fans was acknowledged by those under study. What was evidently shown by many under study was their identity of being either South African or specifically Cape Town fans. The majority of the fans did support consumer European football in some way or another. Some had no interest in it. From the club's point of view, the influence of European football seemed came across as more important than what fans suggested. Nevertheless, the "local" feeling surrounding Cape Town City FC was considered to be of significant meaning amongst the cohort. As shown by the extracts provided, the expressed meanings were categorised by pride.

#### 5.3.4 The Effect of Team Performance and Success

The participants were asked whether they supported any other ABSA Premiership team before Cape Town City FC came into existence. If they did, the researcher attempted to ascertain why a change had been made, and to what extent this was due to perceived team success.

15 participants said that before the emergence of Cape Town City FC, they supported a different club within the ABSA Premiership. Many of those supported a Cape Town-based side. This was either Ajax Cape Town or a club from the 1990s called Cape Town Spurs. The two Soweto clubs (Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates), were supported by the other participants prior to Cape Town City FC. The remaining of participants claimed not to have supported any other local team previously (P5, P10, P12, P13, P14, P15).

Some of the participants linked their support back to childhood influences, rather than contemporary success. Participant 1 stated:

*Cape Town City FC used to be a club in Cape Town in the 1970s. It later ended up ceasing to exist. However, my childhood memories of that team made me want to support the team once the new Cape Town City FC was formed in 2016.*

Participant 4 claimed:

*I think it's a case of my background... and the people in my life who have influenced me over the years. When Cape Town City used to exist... in the... in the 70s... my elders used to support them... Yes, they used to support them back in the day... And... and growing up around that... you know... seeing all those people who mattered to me and played a big role in my life support them... made me have some... some sort of affinity... I suppose. So... so... as soon as Cape Town City was reformed, it was like a throwback to yesteryear. Err. So yeah... I guess the feelings from the past and my elders supporting the original team made me want to support this new version.*

Participant 8 went on:

*My dad played for Cape Town City back in the day. The original Cape Town City. When the club started up again last year I just felt like it would be the right thing to do to support the club again. It was new, it was exciting, but it also had the feeling of the old. The latter is what got my support.*

This was a view that was shared by Participant 13:

*It is a really old team. You know, the other day someone asked me why I support Cape Town City. They wondered why I supported such a new team. I just looked at them and told them to check their history of South African football. Cape Town City is not new. It is a team from many years ago. I used to go and watch them back in 70s with my father at Hartleyvale stadium. So, when the club returned to the scene, I wanted to see if they would be good.*

A more common theme found amongst the cohort was the idea that most of them chose to support the club – with the intention of being part of something that they felt was Cape Townian. In this regard, Participant 19's response was particularly insightful, when asked why he did not support a team in the ABSA Premiership prior to the formation of Cape Town City FC. His words were as follows:

*The club showed interaction with the community. For example, giving home tickets to people who work for the city council. It helped those who can't afford tickets to attend. I never watched PSL as Ajax were the only Cape Town team in the league but hardly had any Cape Townians in the team.*

Participant 5 had the following to say on the matter:

*I think it is quite clear that Cape Town City is an ambitious club. I think they have shown in some ways that they have a plan. I like the way things are looking for the club. They look like they are .. errr... on the up. I think initially, this ambition is what attracted me. If im being specific, I love their mission statement. The fact that it spoke in what I would call a Cape Townian way made me really resonate. The message brought across felt like it was Cape Townian. So as a Cape Townian, how could I not feel like I needed to be part of the club?*

*After all the years of the Dutch influence at Ajax Cape Town, this finally seemed like a club that was locally authentic. I really liked that.*

Participant 6 had a similar response:

*Uhm... I think the owner, John Comitis, said in one of his very first interviews of the season that he thought he got the naming of the club right after he purchased the franchise Mpumalanga Aces. That is something I very much agree with. I think... in my opinion... the name of the club attracted many supporters when it was unveiled. Ajax has been around for years but I did not get a Cape Townian feel from it. It felt like they were in their own world... not among the Cape Townian community. I don't think you can get more Cape Townian than Cape Town City. So... for me... the name got me hooked. It got me asking who is this club? What are they going to be like? It sparked an interest within me and gave me something I can identify myself with. I don't think I have ever experienced that with any other PSL team in my life.*

Participant 8 concluded:

*Although I liked Kaizer Chiefs, they are based in Joburg. I could barely see them play live. I could not really feel like I'm a fan because of the distance. What attracted me to Cape Town City was that they are here. They are a team literally in my home. I've grown up in Cape Town and this City is a big part of me. To... to have a team representing my city feels very special. In that way it trumped Kaizer Chiefs... errr I also think, as an onlooker, the way the team was put together so quickly was very impressive. I don't think anyone expected them to do as well as they did last season and that's a compliment to the management of the club. They... they did a fantastic job... and you could see it from quite soon in the season. I felt like the team and its ethos merged with me well... and yeah... I've been a City fan ever since.*

Apart from the aforementioned, the current success of the team did play a significant role in the eyes of some participants. How they viewed winning as a motivational factor of loyalty is detailed below.

Participant 17 proclaimed:

*The fact that the team are doing so well makes me want to stay loyal to them. That coupled with the fact that the team is based in Cape Town.*

Participant 20 stated:

*The chance of the ABSA Premiership title coming to Cape Town makes me want to stick with this team.*

Participant 21 believed:

*What motivates me to remain loyal to the club is that they are winning games and trophies. They are also growing as a club and playing well football compared to the other teams.*

The following thoughts were derived from the management interview, further highlighting the importance of success:

*Definitely when you winning you communicating. You know there's no doubt about it and that's for me what it is. When you winning you communicating its that simple. Because and then the communication doesn't cost as much because you find people want to communicate with you. They want to be part... they want to be part of it. Part of the winning team, part of the winning culture. So yaa but unfortunately I, unfortunately as a marketing team we don't control that because we cant control that. If the team doesn't win they don't win. Its one of those things you know yaa so.. not easy.*

The idea of success influencing loyalty was more prominent on Twitter. In response to Orlando Pirates announcing the signing of a new player, T1 claimed "let me go see how my new team @CapeTownCity is doing." T3 was very adamant that he was no longer an Orlando Pirate supporter, saying the following: "No more Pirates' affairs with, I'm no longer a buccaneer, officially done with the club, I'm a Cape Town City member now. All ties have been cut, #Iam\_CityFC". Five other fans (T4, T5, T6, T7 and T8) shared these sentiments. T8 said that he had "never thought" he would leave Orlando Pirates until Cape Town City "made" his season. T5 professed that he was now a "Big fan" of Cape Town City, having "supported #OrlandoPirates for over 15 years". T6 gave his "official bye-bye" to Orlando Pirates, as he switched his support to Benny

McCarthy and Cape Town City. In a tongue-in-cheek comment, T7 contemplated relocating to the Western Cape. She cited having already “moved from Bulls to Stormers” and was now “moving from Pirates to Cape Town City FC.” T8 asked the official Cape Town City FC twitter account for a “jersey”; as he was “ditching Pirates”. T2 asked if Kaizer Chiefs were “loaning out supporters” because he wanted “to go to @CapeTownCityFC fam.” T9 said he was “leaving @KaizerChiefs” because Cape Town City is “very ambitious”; and that if the team was based in Johannesburg, he would have “gone to all their home games to support em”.

The change in support did not only relate to switching from a Gauteng team to Cape Town City, it also included changing from Ajax Cape Town to Cape Town City. This is shown in the following tweets. T11 instructed other Ajax Cape Town fans to “follow” him and “support Cape Town City because Comitis knows football.” T15 stated he was now a “Cape Town City supporter” because “Ajax needs to re-evaluate their cheapness”. After a certain round of fixtures had taken place, T12 stated “So Cape Town City won 2-0 and Ajax drew 1-1 to Baroka FC. I think I’m gonna switch my support to the newest club in town. To hell with Ajax.” T13 despondently responded to this tweet, saying “lol... at least you have an alternative in CT, I want to take a break from Kaizer Chiefs, our relationship is toxic.”

Club switching wasn’t the only trend found on Twitter. For some, the opposite was true. T10 questioned fans, saying “Cape Town people aren’t loyal. How ya’ll out here supporting’ Cape Town City FC, like ‘Ajax Cape Town’ hasn’t been existing for years?”

### 5.3.5 Factors that Influence Loyalty Amongst the Fans

This was characterised by varying responses, but some sort of consistency emerged in the process.

Being a fan, as part of one’s personal identity, came across as an important factor. Participant 3 had the following to say:

*I would have to say the answer is yes... I ... I do see it as part of who I am.... As part of my identity.... As I mentioned earlier, I consider myself to love and live the brand.... So, I would say the club is a significant part of me.*

Participant 21 stated:

*I want to be identified with a winning team, so yes, supporting them is part of my personal identity.*

Participant 17 felt:

*I would possibly consider it as important. Because Cape Town City can be described as the traditional team and the culture of Cape Town always seems to be high on the priorities.*

Participant 18 went a step further than others; and he said he wanted to be part of Cape Town City FC in the future:

*I see it as important because I see myself as being part of their structure sometime in the future.*

To one participant, it was rather that football was more important than a personal identity:

Participant 7 claimed:

*To me, personally, football is a way of life. So I would definitely consider it to be important... for sure.*

Other factors were also highlighted as influences. Entertainment and style made up two of the more prominent ones, as seen below.

Participant 20 felt:

*We need a change of football in Cape Town. We need a better football brand. That came in the form of Cape Town City. I also feel like it is an important aspect of my identity. Cape Town City is there for entertainment and important for a Cape Townian.*

While Participant 21 added to his earlier statement:

*Their playing style is what caught my eye. The way the players play together compliments each other's style of play. That and the way they [are] developing [the] talent of young soccer stars.*

As an alternative view, some participants outlined the ways in which they thought loyalty was being hindered. Participant 17 offered the most sobering view.

He believed that:

*The quality of football in South Africa is very poor. People are scared of crimes taking place within the stadiums. Clubs in South Africa are not actively involved with the communities (besides the bigger clubs). The clubs struggle to make new fans. In my opinion, the clubs do not care if they are making new fans or not.*

In addition, transportation issues were pinpointed by some of the participants as roadblocks to prevent fans from showing their loyalty.

Participant 7 made mention of this:

*Transport problems make it impossible for some people to support the club, even if they want to.*

The management interview brought forward the following insight with regards to loyalty, supporting the assertion that transport causes problems:

*There's a lot of issues. There are people that say that the stadium is too far from where where majority of our supporters come from so if you live in mitchells plain, Cape Town centre is very far away. So they, they can get there but the issue is.. when the.. when the game starts at 8 o clock and finishes at 10 o clock, so now how do they get from Cape Town stadium to to er to er to mitchells plain. And then, sometimes they can get the bus or train to the cape town st err station. Erm and they can definitely get a train sometimes if its not too late. The problem is from the station to their houses is quite far so so theres a big issue there with transport and that's one of our problems actually*



*and has been for years is transport. So even, no matter how well I communicate with my supporters, there are outside issues like that I can't control.*

In general, the cohort presented a myriad of responses regarding the influences of loyalty. These were both positive and negative influences; and they ranged from social issues like crime and transport to more 'superficial' reasons, such as winning.

### 5.3.6 The Effect of Brand Image

Most of the participants were found to have a positive view of the Cape Town City FC brand.

Participant 3 said:

*I personally love it. I think it's very modern and bold. Yeah... I really like it... I would say that I love and live the brand... I love to get my hands on the clothing... haha... I now have the Cape Town City track pants and hoodie... Can't wait for new things to come out for me to buy.... Uhhmm... I think it can play a role in getting support... not sure how big... but because it's cool... people want to be seen wearing it and associate themselves with it.*

Participant 5 felt that:

*I don't think anyone could say something negative about the City brand. I think they got it spot on. I personally love it. It has a very different feel to it compared to the other football clubs out there. The club badge even looks like some kind of clothing brand. So yeah, it's very different... very out there... very funky. I think it's good... yea.*

Participant 7 agreed that it had the potential to influence loyalty:

*It is very attractive to the eye. Very different from the other clubs in the country. The club is definitely very well branded. The brand itself does have the ability to attract people... people who aren't even football fans per se. Just... err... on the basis that it looks nice I suppose.*

Participant 6 felt that there was one specific aspect about the brand that made it so appealing:

*I think a word that perfectly describes the club is inclusive. I think that sums up the Cape Town City brand. From the get go it has put itself out there as a team for the city. It has forged the idea that it is a team for everyone. And... and... to be honest, you see it. You see it around Cape Town. You see it at the games itself. You see people of all races, religions and classes coming to watch the team. You see more women than before. I have seen quite a few women attend the matches. Which is great to see. I haven't seen much of that at PSL matches in Cape Town. So I do believe that the brand is very inclusive and that people, including myself, have bought into that. In that regard, I feel like the club have done an outstanding job. Errr... apart from inclusivity... I would say that the brand is also funky... and ... err... hey... it's amazing.*

Participant 18 added:

*It does have a role in gaining support. It's a modern-day brand. It shows that the club tries its best to keep in touch with its fan base. Other clubs in the league do not really do this.*

Participant 21 said:

*The Cape Town City brand is attractive to any football supporter out there.*

The majority of the participants shared these positive feelings. Participant 13 was an exception, who stated:

*It needs work on being more family friendly.*

The generally positive sentiments were found on twitter as well. T14 claimed that the "team is going to be one of the biggest brands in the history of South African football". T15 stated: "If @CapeTownCityFC send me a fans contract I will sign it, they're a cool brand." T16 responded to T15, saying "they've raised the bar, when it comes to branding in SA football, exciting play and overall sound management... The best is yet to come." T17 proclaimed "I \*\*\*\*\* love this @CapeTownCityFC brand!! So well managed! There's no law against supporting two teams in the same league". T18 urged fellow African clubs to learn from Cape Town City, saying "Nigerian clubs please watch the story of @CapeTownCityFC on SS4. Plenty to learn there. The ABC of

building a brand in only one season!”. T19 professed his love for the club, saying “@CapeTownCityFC can expect much more success on and off the field. I’m proud to be associated with the @CTCFC citizens I (heart) the BRAND!”. T20 simply said that the club were “The Coolest Brand in Mzansi”. T21 questioned why other fans wouldn’t want to be involved with the club, saying the following: “CTC are a cool brand, and playing good football, who does not want to be part of that?”

What was evident amongst the cohort was that not only did the majority of them see Cape Town City FC as purely a football team; they also acknowledged them as a brand. This was regardless of whether they thought positively of the brand or not.

### 5.3.7 Whether there was a Scenario that would make a Fan Change Teams

This theme brought forth fluctuating responses.

Participant 1 was adamant in saying that:

*Under no circumstances would I change my club allegiances. The only reason that would make me stop supporting Cape Town City FC and switch to another team is if Cape Town City FC does not exist anymore.*

Participant 4 had a similar viewpoint:

*Absolutely not... uhm I don't think that's how it works in football... you... you choose a team and then stick to it, no? Yeah, I don't think there would be any reason to stop supporting them. Maybe... unless.. they stop existing? Like spurs did? Then they would not be a team to support. But yeah, otherwise... they're stuck with me.*

Some of the participants shared this view. There were, however, a significant number of participants who believed in the opposite.

Participant 7 said:

*Funnily enough there are a couple. In my opinion, two main things would make me reconsider my support. I think... quality of football plays a massive role in support. If there was a constant decrease in the quality of football played by the team I don't think I would be as interested in it. The quality of their play was*

*very exciting through the course of last season. That obviously allowed them to be successful as well. Winning the Telkom KO trophy. Errr... if they were not as exciting... and it was gradually getting worse with no hints of an upturn in fortune, I think I would definitely reconsider my support. Football is about entertainment for me and so if I am not entertained then I don't see the point of watching. That's the first one. I think secondly, if the club were to sell good players or if good players wanted to leave the club then that would make me think twice. I really like the number 27, Tshepo Gumedede, so if the club were to sell him that would be a big negative in my eyes. You want your best players to stay at the club and if they are getting sold I don't think that shows much ambition.*

Participant 8 proclaimed:

*Probably only one scenario. I have big respect for the owner of the club, Mr. John Comitis. When he was the owner at Ajax Cape Town the club did relatively well on a consistent basis. Now, at a new club, they have started off very well and look as though that they are going to go from strength to strength. I think he knows how to run a football club. I think he is one of the best football administrators in the country. I think he is a big reason behind the success of the team. If there were a point in time where he leaves the club, I think it is quite possible that I would leave too.*

Participant 9 felt:

*When supporters or fans are not recognised. Secondly, when wrong decisions are being made from coaching staff and technical staff.*

And Participant 12 thought the same:

*If they lose touch with their supporters*

Winning was a factor that was particularly highlighted by some.

Participant 16 said:

*Quite simple really, if the team is doing poorly they will lose my support*

Participant 18 thought:

*If for any reason the team fails to comply with the league's expectations. The factors would possibly be the team in relegation, not winning their games and poor management of the team*

P19 listed:

*I would switch teams in three cases. If loyalty towards fans wasn't good enough I would go. If the club showed a lack of ambition I would go too. Also, the signing of foreign players and not giving quality Cape Townian an opportunity would make me want to cut ties.*

P21 stated:

*There are things that would make me change. If the team stops performing well I won't like them as much. Uhm, if a new coach comes and changes the teams play that won't be nice. Also, if the players stop playing hard to win then I don't see the need to give them my support.*

The varying responses showed that the cohort were not shy to share their opinions about changes in loyalty, even in cases where they would be potentially seen as disloyal fans.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the interpretation of the findings suggests that the participants of the study were cognisant of different loyalty measures; and that many factors were thought to influence the loyalty of them, as found in the earlier literature. Pride in local football and the desire to be part of something authentically Cape Townian were visible influences behind loyalty. However, it was also found that there were scenarios for many of the participants, in which they could envisage changing their support from Cape Town City FC to a different club. This contradicted the conventional thought that fans stick with the team they choose: no matter what! The next chapter will provide some recommendations after summarising the findings of this chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to conclude the study at hand. It consists of a summary of the literature review and the findings of the research. The similarities and variances between the literature and the findings are detailed. What the findings mean for those in management positions at Cape Town City FC is described thereafter. Finally, future research avenues are given some recommendations; and this is followed by the conclusion of the chapter, and then the study overall.

### **6.2 This Study's Findings**

Herewith, a few of the summarised points from the literature found in the review of this study. This section will be followed by a summary of the primary data findings.

#### **6.2.1 Findings from the Literature Reviewed**

- Fans are viewed as the lifeblood of a football club; and they play an imperative role in both the financial and the sporting performance of the team. Accordingly, it is incumbent for clubs to learn more about their fans, in order to ensure long-term loyalty amongst them (Bridgewater, 2010).
- Some fans use team support as a form of cultural celebration (Segrave & Chu, 1996).
- Others are motivated to support due to aesthetic appeal and specifically, that due to beauty and style (Wann & Wilson, 1999).
- Loyalty amongst the fans has a better chance of being maintained if there is open interaction between the club and its support base. Interaction is seen as an issue of high importance in the eyes of the fan (James, 1997).
- Individuals amongst the management of the team can attract and maintain fans (Bauer et al., 2005; Gladden & Funk, 2001).
- Cape Town football fans are hindered by the reality that the stadium is located far away from where many of them live (Alegi, 2007).

- Brand image has the potential to positively influence loyalty; as it can provide the one constant in the minds of the fans in an industry where performance is erratic (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008).
- Many fans are more interested in European football, rather than in that of the local game (Cleland, 2011).
- Fans want to bask in the reflected glory of the team that they support. Simply put, they want to be associated with something successful; as this makes them feel that they too are successful (Cialdini et al., 1976).

### 6.2.2 Findings of the Primary Data Collected

On the basis of the objectives held for this research, the findings from the semi-structured interviews are summarised below.

#### 6.2.2.1 Determine the Extent of the Loyalty Levels Displayed by Cape Town City FC fans.

This objective is constituted of themes 1 and 3 that are detailed in section 5.1. The participants studied generally showed a knowledge of both behavioural and attitudinal loyalty in the context of team support, with the focus on match attendance. They highlighted the importance of taking both measures into consideration, when evaluating the loyalty of a fan. This demonstrated that the sample had some interest in what was deemed loyalty within the industry and what was not.

In addition, the sample suggested that the success of the team made being loyal an easier prospect. They contended that this made them want to associate themselves with the team. Many of the participants revealed that they had in fact switched their loyalty from certain clubs to Cape Town City FC, following the latter's formation. It was shown that the idea of a team that they could culturally relate to influenced their intention to adopt Cape Town City FC as their new team. Their attitude towards this cultural influence was portrayed in a positive manner. This goes in line with the idea that sport is used as a form of cultural celebration by some fans (Segrave & Chu, 1996).

The supporters' liaison at the club made mention that it would be difficult to assess the loyalty levels of fans at the present time – because the club was successful in its inaugural year of existence. As such, one would find it difficult to find a disgruntled fan at the moment; since their experience with the club has only been positive.

#### 6.2.2.2 Assessing those Factors Contributing to the Loyalty of the Fans

Themes 3, 4 and 5 formed the basis of this objective; while themes 2 and 6 were important. Varying factors were found to influence the loyalty amongst the fans. However, there was a certain level of consistency that allowed the researcher to pick out five key areas, which were thought to influence the fans in a positive manner. Firstly, the participants revealed that personal/social identity had impacted them positively when it came to being loyal to Cape Town City; as they wanted to be linked with a successful team. Some narrated that if the team stopped being successful, they would end up by changing teams. Secondly, aesthetic pleasure was brought up as a reason that stimulates loyalty. This aligns with the belief that non-stylistic sports are also appreciated for their style and beauty (Wann & Wilson, 1999).

Some of participants placed importance on the entertainment value and quality of the football being played. The greater they deemed these two to be, the easier their loyalties were maintained.

Thirdly, brand Image was shown to have significant influence: both in the cohort used in the study; and in the online tweets that were studied. Many fans online gave one the impression that the Cape Town City brand was very appealing to them. Something that was highlighted in both the online tweets and the participants of the study was that the brand felt very inclusive. This idea of inclusivity was linked to the ever-present desire of being part of an authentic Cape Town club; and that point often came out clearly in the interviews.

Fourthly, a common finding amongst the cohort was that they were of the belief that in general, the club interacted with supporters relatively well; and that this would have to continue, in order for them to maintain their respective loyalties. What this finding showed was that the fans felt as if they played a certain important role in the functionality of the team. The researcher often got the sense that the participants felt entitled to a certain level of interaction between themselves and the club. The more



information that the club was willing to divulge to them; and the more open the club was, the more content they would be. This finding was supported by the supporters' liaison; as they made mention of the fact that the club had gained a reputation for being one of the most interactive clubs on the social media – and especially twitter. The findings also align with the claim of James (1997), who believed that some fans highly valued their interaction with their club.

Finally, something that was not assumed to have much influence when going into the study was the effect of certain individuals at the football club in terms of loyalty. Some participants specifically mentioned either former Head Coach, Eric Tinkler, or Owner, John Comitis, as the reason for their loyalty for the club. These revelations demonstrated the fact that the fans care just as much about product extensions of the club; as they do about the football being played. This finding supports the claims of various researchers that team management has the ability to draw fans to a particular club (Bauer et al., 2005; Gladden & Funk, 2001).

#### 6.2.2.3 Simultaneously Examining Factors that may be contributing to disloyalty

Themes 2, 4 and 6 anchored the responses to this question. As mentioned above, the concept of loyalty was given various meanings by the participants. These meanings were both of an attitudinal and behavioural nature. Some of the participants believed that poor match attendance was an indicator of disloyalty. In light of this, the cohort gave their impressions on the factors driving low attendances. Predominantly, transport issues were flagged as a major drawback to attendance. Those under study believed that the reality of the situation was that many fans simply could not afford to go to matches because of the distance between their respective homes and Cape Town Stadium. This finding bears some similarity to the claim of Alegi (2007), who argued that the stadium is located worlds away from Cape Town's main football community.

A few calls were made by the participants on Cape Town City FC management to act and help supporters to get to the stadium.

When it came to loyal behaviour in ways other than match attendance, the sample had a wide range of views. An observation made by some members of the cohort was a perceived lack of awareness about the club within the city. These participants were of

the belief that the team needed to create more awareness for itself within the different communities of Cape Town. Here, it was suggested that Cape Town City FC was not in the hearts of the normal Cape Town persons; because they were not seen physically interacting and caring for fans, as much as the participants thought they should be. This finding contrasted with the idea that brand awareness is generally high for professional sports teams, as contended by Bauer, Sauer and Exler (2008). In relation to a lack of presence on the part of the club, a good number of participants felt because the club did not own its own stadium, this made it hard for fans to feel any sort of attachment. For one participant, in particular, it wasn't even about owning a stadium, but merely consistently playing in the same one. This was in reference to the fact that Cape Town City FC play matches at both Cape Town Stadium and Athlone Stadium.

This was also acknowledged by the supporters' liaison at Cape Town City FC, who believed that a very different profile of supporter attendance at matches at Cape Town Stadium in comparison with those played in the Athlone Stadium. The perceived lack of presence of Cape Town City FC mirrors the findings of the First Africa Football report (2014).

Additionally, watching European football was suggested to have some sort of influence on the participants. For those who described themselves as more loyal to a given European team, the vast majority pinpointed the quality of the football played as the reason for this. Even if they did not support a European team, the general consensus amongst the cohort was that although they loved local football, European football was just bigger and better.

Cape Town City's supporters' liaison highlighted that the aforementioned was a concern for all ABSA Premiership clubs. The fact that fans have the option of watching a European match at the same time as a local one often means the latter misses out. This sort of behaviour supports the term 'electronic fans of overseas sweethearts', as contended by Cleland (2011).

Lastly, the importance of success was highlighted by the sample. Some were blunt enough to mention that should the team stop winning, they would consider switching their support to a different team. This finding suggests that people want to align themselves with something that is perceived to be of value and successful. This idea

bears similarity with the notion of 'Basking in Reflected Glory', as proposed by Cialdini et al. (1976).

From a management point of view, the liaison revealed a point that could currently explain the idea of disloyalty. He mentioned that at present, the club does not have a comprehensive database of its fans. This means that it is hard to serve a consumer base, of which one knows very little.

### **6.3 The Study's Other Findings**

Apart from the actual participants of the research, the study found that Twitter proved to be a very useful and informative platform. It appears, even though they could be identified by name, people felt more comfortable to share contentious opinions online as opposed to face-to-face. This was specifically the case when the fans online spoke about the concept of loyalty. There was a recurrent theme of people switching from one club to another. This was something that the researcher found very interesting; as it illustrated the differences between online and offline behaviour of fans.

### **6.4 Conclusions**

Some similarities between the primary and the secondary data were provided by the findings of the study. The conclusions given below are again detailed in relation to the three objectives of the study at hand. They are as follows:

#### **6.4.1 Determine the extent of the loyalty levels displayed by Cape Town City FC fans**

The cohort displayed some perplexing behaviour, when it came to the loyalty levels that they displayed. Some claimed to have switched from a different ABSA Premiership club to Cape Town City FC after the formation of the latter. However, in the same breath, many of them claimed that there was no scenario that would make them change from Cape Town City FC to another team. At the same time, there were those who, without hesitation, narrated a list of circumstances, which would influence them and potentially sway their loyalty away from their current club. Naturally then, it is difficult to generalise the extent of loyalty levels displayed by the fans; since different fans behaved differently. Nevertheless, generalisation is not the aim. Rather, the study of the loyalty levels displayed was done, in order to ascertain whether the belief that

undying fan loyalty was true, or not, in the South African context. The participants of the study have revealed that this is not always the case. This does not necessarily need to be seen as a negative for those who market Cape Town City FC and other ABSA Premiership teams. It could alternatively be taken from the viewpoint that it is possible to sway fans from other teams towards the club.

Since the club is only in its first year of existence, building up the fan base should be an issue that is high on the agenda.

Additionally, South African heritage and Cape Town roots were the source of much pride for the participants under study. Football was found to be their chosen means of expressing this. While there was most definitely an appreciation for European football and an acknowledgement that local football isn't always of the best quality, there was a deep-rooted desire to see local footballers. In addition, therefore when marketing to the fans already present at the club, the aforementioned should be kept in mind and made used of – in an attempt to garner their loyalty.

#### 6.4.2 Assessing factors contributing to the loyalty of the fans

The investigation of this objective was conducted, in order to find out what were the factors that could potentially stimulate loyalty amongst the fan base. The target population pinpointed team management as a significant aspect on the list of influences. This was in terms of both the coaches at the club and the owner. Linked to this, emphasis was placed on the interaction between the club and its fans. This interest in communicating with the club in any way possible could be used to the advantage of those in charge of marketing.

In an age of social media, this is much easier; and the club could implement the idea of management members being available for online participation with fans whenever possible. This is not to say that the club should only interact online; but it is a method that allows for the masses to be afforded the chance to interact simultaneously. This could be especially of use to the club now that it is headed by a big name in South African football, namely: Coach Benny McCarthy.

Brand image was also shown to be of positive influence. Amongst the participants of the study, there were no negative attitudes towards the brand, which could be

detected. On a basic level, the participants showed a desire to consume Cape Town City-related products, due to their positive thoughts about the brand and how it looks. As some participants made mention of there being a lack of awareness of the club in communities, a more concerted effort could be made to make use of this positive brand image.

#### 6.4.3 Simultaneously examining factors that may be contributing to disloyalty

In relation to the final objective, the participants revealed two main sources that lead to perceived disloyalty. In terms of the social reality in Cape Town, the lack of transportation was deemed to be one of the main reasons that fans did not display behavioural loyalty (i.e. match attendance). The fact that fans want to come, but are unable to, could be seen as an opportunity for marketers. Deals could perhaps be struck with public transports operators, such as Golden Arrow buses, to provide transport for the fans – on the basis that they are part of the official membership club and display their fan card.

In addition, team success was desired by some of the participants as a requirement of loyalty. Some of them made mention of the fact that they would switch teams; should Cape Town City become less successful. As sporting performance is unpredictable, and not in the hands of marketers, this factor cannot directly be addressed. However, marketers are afforded the chance, through brand image mentioned above, of providing the consumer with something constant in an industry that is erratic. This could potentially alleviate the fears of fans turning their back on the club during tough periods.

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned, the three objectives outlined at the very beginning were taken care of. This is despite the significance of the mentioned influences that are not precisely known. In the following section, the researcher's overall recommendations are described.

### 6.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, this section details the researcher's recommendations.

### 6.5.1 Open Dialogue with Fans

Management at Cape Town City FC should implement practices, such as open dialogues with fans, where issues can be discussed. Fan zones could be created, fan clubs can too; and engagement with the fans overall could be improved. This is especially with regard to aspects, such as the strategy behind image design; as image was shown to be a big factor in the minds of the fans during the data-collection process.

### 6.5.2 CRM/ FRM

The study obtained information that Cape Town City FC had very limited knowledge of who exactly comprised their fan base. Cape Town City FC should implement a fan-relationship management strategy at their club. In essence, anyone can be a potential fan of the team. However, if the club gains a deep knowledge of their current fan base and understand their behaviours, they could better attend to their needs. By better attending to their needs, it would become easier for them to remain loyal to the club. In addition, it would become easier to find those people who are similar to current fans; and as a result, their conversion to becoming a fan of the club could be assisted. In addition, having a comprehensive database of fans makes it easier to tailor-make the approaches to different groups.

## 6.6 Recommendations for Future Studies

The few recommendations for future studies are:

Firstly, since a limitation of this study was that the findings could not be generalised due to its qualitative nature and small sample size; future researchers should look at using a mixed-method approach, in order to obtain more representative findings. The qualitative study should have a larger sample size, so that these findings could more easily be generalised.

Secondly, this study solely obtained information through the use of various supporters' club. In the future, the target population could be made larger. Those fans that are part of supporters' clubs could be studied and juxtaposed with those who are not part of any such structure. In addition, the majority of this study's findings came from male

participants. Future studies could involve more female participants; and seek to assess the differences between their behaviour and that of their male counterparts.

Thirdly, a study like this, could take a more longitudinal approach. As mentioned, this study analysed the fans of Cape Town City FC during their inaugural season in the ABSA Premiership. This was coupled by the fact that they proved to be very successful during that season. It would be interesting to see how the fans would react when the team is not doing so well. Future studies could study the fans at the start of the season – and then re-study them at the end of the season nine months later. In addition, a study could be conducted to see the differences between the two seasons: one in which the team has done well; and a second one, in which the team has not done very well.

Fourthly, this study and previous studies in South Africa have approached the matter of fan loyalty from the perspective of the fans. A future study could do an in-depth analysis on the management and club itself, in order to ascertain whether the best conditions are being met – in order to stimulate the fans' loyalty.

Fifthly, valuable insights were found on social media network, Twitter. It appeared that people more easily shared views that contradicted conventional wisdom about loyalty on this site. Therefore, future research could focus on studying consumer behaviour of the fans online. Additionally, it could compare fan behaviour online versus fan behaviour offline.

Lastly, as attendances in the league in general are low, future studies could incorporate all 16 clubs into the research process.

## **6.7 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

Football is a game that has grown in significance, both commercially and socially, in recent decades. In South Africa, its popularity is quite apparent. The consumer behaviour of the fans in this country has had limited attention; and therefore, the purpose of this study was to see whether they could be characterised as consistently loyal. The factors influencing both loyalty and the lack thereof were addressed, in order to get a more wholesome understanding of fan behaviour within this setting. The primary data of the research were provided via semi-structured interviews; as informed

by the qualitative methodology chosen to carry out the study. Valuable insights, in relation to the objectives of this study, emerged through these data. The failure of the team to succeed was revealed as being an influential factor in fostering disloyalty. On the other hand, brand image appeared to have a positive connection with loyalty. Additional factors, such as team management, aesthetic appeal and cultural connections emerged from the research, as well.

It was rather evident that those under study showed much pride in being Cape Townian; and they related more easily to things that felt authentically Cape Townian. This feeling should be focused on by marketers, when addressing the needs of the target audience and confirmed.



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# APPENDIX A

## THE MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

## Screening Questionnaire

1. Gender:
2. Age:
3. Number of home matches attended during the season:
4. How would you characterize your loyalty to Cape Town City FC?
  - ☐ Not at all
  - ☐ Less loyal than other fans
  - ☐ More loyal than other fans
  - ☐ Very loyal
5. "If the team was performing badly and an improvement seemed unlikely (i.e. relegation), I might re-think my allegiance to the club."
  - ☐ Strongly Disagree
  - ☐ Mildly Disagree
  - ☐ Neutral
  - ☐ Mildly Agree
  - ☐ Strongly Agree

## **Interview Guide (Fan Interviews)**

**Question 1:** Before the formation of Cape Town City FC in 2016, did you support any other ABSA Premiership team?

- If so, which team?

**Question 2:** What made you choose to support Cape Town City FC? What initially attracted you to the team?

**Question 3:** Having become a fan, what factors motivate you to remain one?

**Question 4:** What is your impression of the Cape Town City FC brand?

- Do you think it plays any role in gaining support?

**Question 5:** Is there a scenario which would convince you to switch your support from Cape Town City FC to another team?

- What factors do you think would convince a fan to change teams?

**Question 6:** Would you consider being a Cape Town City FC fan as an important aspect of your personal identity?

- If so, why is that the case?

**Question 7:** Do you support any European football team?

- If so, would you consider yourself to be more loyal to the European team or to Cape Town City FC?

**Question 8:** If you consider yourself to be more loyal to a European team, what are the reasons for this?

**Question 9:** Would you consider match attendance to be the biggest indicator of loyalty for a Cape Town City FC fan?

- What other factors would you consider to be important?

**Question 10:** Why do you think match attendances are low?

- What could be done to attract more fans to the stadium?



## **Interview Guide (Member of Cape Town City FC Management)**

**Question 1:** First and foremost, what is the relationship with the fan base? How do you communicate with them? Often football clubs appear to operate within a bubble so how does the club bridge this gap?

**Question 2:** What is the club's relationship with the supporter clubs? How does that work? Not only official ones.

**Question 3:** What is the club's involvement in the community? What types of initiatives does it like to get involved in? How easily accessible is information about these initiatives?

**Question 4:** Where can fans get their hands on official club merchandise? The reason I ask this is for visibility purposes. How visible is the club in the minds of South Africans?

**Question 5:** Onto an obvious topical issue in South African football- the attendance issues at games across the country. Firstly, what does the club think that's down to? Would you say dual allegiance is a problem? Secondly, what are the tactical intentions of the club? Is it to attempt to acquire new fans or is it to maximise the existing ones.

**Question 6:** What strategies does the club implement in terms of fan retention? Is the strategy to segment the fans of the club or serve them en masse?

**Question 7:** How is this segmentation done? Is it based on the type of fans out there i.e. causal to die hard, or is it based on demographic and geographic factors, for example?

**Question 8:** Does the club have some sort of database to help this segmentation process?

**Question 9:** How is supporter value derived? Is it based behavioural patterns such as match attendance? On a related note, how would the club describe its loyal fan? Because maybe in the context of european team this could be done through season tickets yet the landscape here is very different.



## APPENDIX B

### TWEETS USED

### Tweet 1:

Mxm...let me go see how my new team  
[@CapeTownCityFC](#) is doing!

**Orlando Pirates FC**  [@Orlando\\_Pirates](#)

We are proud to announce the latest signing  
to the Club #WelcomeSandilands  
#OnceAlways



### Tweet 2:



When Is [@KaizerChiefs](#) Loaning Out  
Supporters ? I Wanna Go To  
[@CapeTownCityFC](#) Fam

17

19

50



### Tweet 3:



No more Pirates affairs with, I'm no  
longer a Buccaneer, officially done with  
the club, I'm CapeTown City member  
now.

13/07/17, 14:06 from [Bellville, South Africa](#)



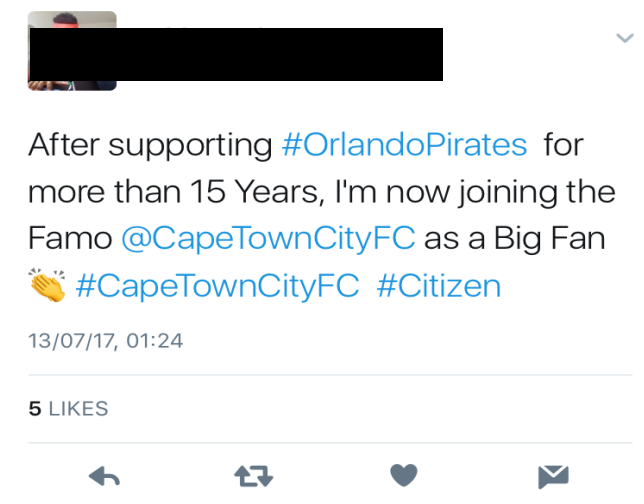
All ties have been cut, [#Iam\\_CityFC](#)



#### Tweet 4:



#### Tweet 5:



#### Tweet 6:



### Tweet 7:



I think I should just go stay in the Western Cape, I moved from Bulls to Stormers and now I'm moving from Pirates to Cape Town City FC

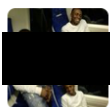
### Tweet 8:



### Tweet 9:



Tweet



If @CapeTownCity was a team based la ejozi, I was gone go to all their home games support em, they're very ambitious, I'm leaving @KaizerChiefs

06/06/17, 12:29



### Tweet 10:

 Tweet  


Cape Town people aren't loyal. How y'all out here supporting' Cape Town City FC' like 'Ajax Cape Town' hasn't been existing for years?




05/11/16, 16:19

---

2 RETWEETS 3 LIKES

### Tweet 11:

 AjaxCTfans Retweeted






  
 

"@ajaxcapetown are unambitious, their owner does not know football," Ajax fans follow me & support Cape Town City bcz Comitis knows football

26/06/16, 10:39

---

1 RETWEET 1 LIKE

### Tweets 12 and 13:

 Tweet  

So Cape Town City won 2-0 and Ajax drew 1-1 to Baroka FC. I think I'm gonna switch my support to the new-ish club in town. To hell with Ajax

24/08/16, 06:06

---

4 LIKES



24/08/16  
...Atleast you have an alternative in CT, I want to take a break from Kaizer Chiefs, our relationship is toxic...

### Tweet 14:



### Tweets 15 and 16:



### Tweet 17:





### Tweet 18:



Nigerian clubs please watch the story of [@CapeTownCityFC](#) on SS4. Plenty to learn there. The ABC of building à brand in only one season !

03/06/17, 17:47

5 RETWEETS 2 LIKES

### Tweet 19:

♥ Cape Town City FC liked



[@CapeTownCityFC](#) can expect much more success on and off the field. I'm proud to be associated with the [@CTCFCcitizens](#) I ♥ the BRAND!

13/06/17, 10:29

1 RETWEET 3 LIKES

### Tweet 20:



The Coolest Brand in mzansi  
[@CapeTownCityFC](#)

Mel 🇿🇦 @Mel\_Mzansi

You gotta love ❤️ SA 🇿🇦 🤔 pic.twitter.com/MInDCsBVBR

26/06/17, 12:21

1 RETWEET 1 LIKE

### Tweet 21:



Replying to [@DmSelloane](#)

CTC are a cool brand, and playing good football, who does not want to be part of that? [@DmSelloane](#)  
[@Orlando\\_Pirates](#) [@CapeTownCityFC](#)

03/04/17, 20:45

